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LIVES
OF CELEBRATED
STATESMEN

BY

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, L. L. D.

WITH A

Sketch of the Author,

BY THE

REV. CHARLES W. UPHAM.

NEW-YORK:
W. H. GRAHAM, TRIBUNE BUILDINGS.

1846.

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# JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

BY REV. C. W. UPHAM.

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JOHN QUINCY ADAMS is one of those men whose history is so marked and signalized by the events that crowd into their lives, and the variety and greatness of the services they have rendered, that no mere language of eulogy can be compared in impressiveness with the simplest narrative of their actions. We may dismiss the entire vocabulary of superlatives, and set aside all the terms that are used to describe the qualities of objects, and in the plainest possible language, mention, in order, the posts he has occupied, and the public labors he has performed, and the reader will rise from the bare record with an appreciating sense of his usefulness and greatness, such as no high-flown general panegyric could possibly produce.

No American has had the opportunities and privileges he has enjoyed; and no one, it is probable, ever will. He was the child of parents, so great and so good, that it would have been strange, indeed, if his character had not received a deep and permanent impression from their examples and influence. It was his singular privilege to receive the most precious boon of a benignant Providence, in the original constitution and innate ingredients of his mental and spiritual nature—a full measure of the excellent qualities of both his father and his mother. In the strength of his intellect, in the largeness of his political views, and the fervent energy of his impulses, we behold the traits of that character which made John Adams a master-spirit of the American revolution; and whoever reads the letters, or retains in his memory an image of his mother, will trace the influence of that admirable woman in many of the finer features of the mind and spirit of her son. It was his privilege to receive, in his earliest youth, lessons of piety, morality and patriotism from the lips of parents whose lives enforced their precepts, and presented bright and noble examples of the virtues they inculcated.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS was born in Braintree, in Massachusetts, in that part of the town which has since been set off and incorporated by the name of Quincy, on Saturday, July 11th, 1767. He was named "John Quincy," from the following circumstances. His mother was the daughter of Rev. Wm. Smith, pastor of the Congregational church in the neighboring town of Weymouth. The wife of Mr. Smith, the maternal grandmother of the subject of this memoir, was Elizabeth Quincy, daughter of John Quincy, who is mentioned by Hutchinson as the owner of Mount Wollaston, had shared largely in the civil and military distinctions of his time and country, and in honor of him the present town of Quincy received its name. When Quincy was on his death-bed, and expired a few hours after the birth of his great grandchild—at the special request of the grandmother, the name of her father, then lying dead, was given to the new-born infant, who was baptized the next day, in the Congregational church of the Free Parish of Braintree.

Mr. Adams has been favored in the period which his life has covered, as well as in the influences under which it commenced. His history runs back to the beginning of the revolution, embraces its trying and stimulating experiences, and includes the entire range of wonderful events which have been accumulated within the last seventy years.

The earlier years of most men that have become eminent in after life are not found

to have been remarkable for any great variety of adventure, or extraordinary positions in society. But the youth of Mr. Adams, dating even into his childhood, was certainly marked by very many circumstances as unusual and memorable as the long and eminent career of his public life since has proved a fitting sequence to them. Towards the close of the year 1777, John Adams was appointed Joint Commissioner, with Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee, to the Court of Versailles. The boy, John Quincy, then in the eleventh year of his age, accompanied his father to France. They sailed from Boston in February, 1778, and arrived at Bordeaux early in April. During the period of their stay in France, which was about eighteen months, young Adams was kept in a French school, studying the native language, with the usual classical exercises, which were nowhere better taught, at that time, than in the institutions of Paris. The diplomatic arrangements with the French Government having been brought to a fortunate close, they returned to America, in the French ship *La Sensible*, and in company with the Chevalier de la Luzerne, who had been despatched by the government as minister to the United States. They arrived in Boston on the 1st of August, 1779; but the great talents and prosperous services of John Adams, as manifested on both sides of the water, and the perilous circumstances of the country—for it was really one of the darkest periods of the Revolutionary struggle—still turned the eyes of the National Council upon him. Within three months after his return, he was again despatched to Europe by Congress. Resolving to educate his son not more by books than an early familiarity with important scenes and events, and a full comprehension of the characters and positions of different nations, he took his son with him on this second voyage. The frigate they sailed in was commanded by the celebrated naval character, Commodore Tucker. The ocean was covered with the fleets of the enemy; and the whole passage was a succession of hazardous adventures and narrow escapes, as well from hostile squadrons as the severity of tempests. They were frequently pursued by enemies of vastly superior force, and once or twice were on the very point of capture. The commander had determined to yield to no force, however great, without a struggle, and as the pursuing vessel approached, all hands were beat to quarters, and the frigate cleared for action. It was on this occasion that John Adams, impatient of inaction, threw off the ambassador, and hurrying up from his cabin, placed himself with the sailors at the side of a cannon—a moment for the young son to gather that enthusiasm, that intrepid patriotism and personal courage that belonged to descendants of the Puritans, and which have characterized his history at all subsequent periods of his life.

Certainly, no person in this country was ever favored with such an education as fortunate circumstances gave to the youth of John Quincy Adams. The voyages and residences with his father in Europe, were precisely adapted to nurture and bring into a vigorous and comprehensive development, all the desirable qualities and attainments of mind and heart of one destined to act a great and patriotic part in the history of his country. He witnessed the private and familiar intercourse of his learned and accomplished father with all the great dignitaries of foreign courts, and with the most eminent and celebrated scholars and philosophers of that age. He often listened also to the sober and solemn discussions of the great champions and friends of the liberty and independence of his country, in that trying time. Franklin and Lee, and other leading Americans, were frequently at his father's lodgings, and the intelligent and ardent boy entered into the spirit of the anxious debates in which they were absorbed, in reference to the prospects of America, and the vibrating issue of the fearful and most momentous conflict in which she was engaged. His mind and heart were wrought upon most deeply by the "dread uncertainty" that hung over the destinies of his distant country, and by these influences the sources were early deepened and purified of that patriotism which is a passion in his breast, and, in its solemnity and fervor, rises frequently, in his writings and speeches, to the elevation of a religious sentiment.

He had the advantage, too, of becoming familiar—as he could not otherwise have become, while so young—with the history, resources, interests, and prospects of America. It was his father's business to secure favor and aid from the governments of Europe, for the American States, in the unequal contest with the power of Britain—a business which he accomplished with a success and efficiency that entitles him to be considered



as the preserver and saviour of the independence of his country. Without foreign aid, the colonies could not have triumphed—that foreign aid John Adams was the great instrument in securing. His diplomatic services, in this regard, have never been fully appreciated. Bravery, skill, fortitude and patriotism did all that they could do, on the battle-field and in council, here in America; but without supplies of money and munitions from abroad, so that

“War might, best upheld,  
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,  
In all her equipage”—

without these, the cause would have been lost. Young Adams was, doubtless, often a witness and listener to the earnest appeals, and convincing statements, and minute exhibitions of the means, and extent, and natural resources of the revolted colonies, by which his father persuaded cabinets and capitalists that the revolution was not a chimerical, and visionary, and impracticable struggle, but a movement in pursuit of independence by a country worthy of their respect and of their aid, and which, if seasonably and sufficiently aided and encouraged, would soon vindicate her right to demand admission into the family of nations. A better school for a young statesman cannot be imagined, than his experience while with his father on his mission to foreign courts.

In the meanwhile the lessons of virtue and religion were reiterated to his mind and heart in the letters of his mother. The strains in which that noble woman addressed him, have often been presented to the public; a single passage here is sufficient:—“It is your lot, my son, to own your existence among a people who have made a glorious defence of their invaded liberties, and who, aided by a generous and powerful ally, with the blessing of heaven, will transmit this inheritance to ages yet unborn; nor ought it to be one of the least of your incitements towards exerting every power and faculty of your mind, that you have a parent who has taken so large a share in this contest, and discharged the trust reposed in him with so much satisfaction as to be honored with the important embassy that now calls him abroad. The strict and inviolate regard you have ever paid to truth, gives me pleasing hopes that you will not swerve from her dictates; but add justice, fortitude, and every manly virtue which can adorn a good citizen, do honor to your country, and render your parents supremely happy, particularly your ever affectionate mother.”—His character and his attainments, while in foreign countries, during this portion of his youth, gave evidence that his opportunities and privileges were not thrown away.

In going to Europe the second time, the frigate sprung a leak in a gale of wind, and was forced to vary from her port of destination, which was Brest, and to put into the port of Ferrol, in Spain. From there they travelled to Paris—from Paris they went to Holland. The lad was put to school, in Paris; afterwards in Amsterdam, and finally, in the University of Leyden. In July, 1781, Mr. Francis Dana, (father of the poet, R. H. Dana,) who had been secretary to the embassy of John Adams, was commissioned as Plenipotentiary to Russia, and he took with him John Quincy Adams, then fourteen years of age, as his private secretary. His letters from St. Petersburg to his friends in America, betray a marked intelligence and power of observation early awakened. He remained in Russia, with Mr. Dana, until October, 1782, when he left St. Petersburg, and returned alone, through Sweden, Denmark, Hamburg and Bremen to Holland, spending the winter in the route, and stopping some time in Stockholm, Copenhagen and Hamburg. In Holland he remained some months, until his father took him from the Hague to Paris, where he was present at the signing of the Treaty of Peace in September, 1783, and from that time to May, 1785, he was with his father in England and Holland, as well as France. At London he had rare opportunities for the early formation of the future statesman, being introduced by distinguished members of Parliament upon the floor of the House, and listening many times to the eloquence of Burke, Pitt, Fox, Sheridan, and other eminent orators, whose great talents at that time adorned the British nation. In his eighteenth year his father yielded to his solicitations, and allowed him to return to his native country. He entered Harvard University at an advanced standing, and was graduated as Bachelor of Arts, in 1787, with distinguished honor. He then entered

the office, at Newburyport, of the celebrated Theophilus Parsons, afterwards Chief Justice of Massachusetts. Upon completing the study of the law, he entered the profession and established himself in Boston. He remained there four years, extending his acquaintance with the first principles of law, and taking part in the important questions which then engrossed the attention of the people. In the summer of 1791, he published a series of papers, widely circulated and much spoken of, under the signature of *Publicola*, in the *Boston Centinel*, containing remarks upon the first part of Paine's *Rights of Man*. In these articles, he showed his sagacity in being among the first to suggest doubts of the favorable issue of the French Revolution. These pieces were reprinted in England.

Notwithstanding Mr. Adams' previous extraordinary life, and the unquestioned attainments he had made in various knowledge, he seems at this time to have been dissatisfied both with what he had done and with what lay before him. A passage from his Diary at that period, furnished by his son, finely illustrates the severe opinions he had formed of the laborious diligence to be practised by a young man, of whatever abilities, who may be desirous of effectively serving his country, or of acquiring for himself an honorable name.

"Wednesday, May 16th, 1792. I am not satisfied with the manner in which I employ my time. It is calculated to keep me forever fixed in that state of useless and disgraceful insignificance, which has been my lot for some years past. At an age bearing close upon twenty-five, when many of the characters who were born for the benefit of their fellow creatures have rendered themselves conspicuous among their cotemporaries, and founded a reputation upon which their memory remains, and will continue to the latest posterity—at that period, I still find myself as obscure, as unknown to the world, as the most indolent, or the most stupid of human beings. In the walks of active life, I have done nothing. Fortune, indeed, who claims to herself a large proportion of the merit which exhibits to public view the talents of professional men, at an early period of their lives, has not hitherto been peculiarly indulgent to me. But if to my own mind I inquire whether I should, at this time, be qualified to receive and derive any benefit from an opportunity which it may be in her power to procure for me, my own mind would shrink from the investigation. My heart is not conscious of an unworthy ambition; nor of a desire to establish either fame, honor or fortune upon any other foundation than that of desert. But it is conscious, and the consideration is equally painful and humiliating, it is conscious that the ambition is constant and unceasing, while the exertions to acquire the talents which ought alone to secure the reward of ambition, are feeble, indolent, frequently interrupted, and never pursued with an ardor equivalent to its purposes. My future fortunes in life are, therefore, the objects of my present speculation, and it may be proper for me to reflect further upon the same subject, and if possible, to adopt some resolutions which may enable me, as uncle Toby Shandy said of his miniature sieges, to answer the great ends of my existence.

"First, then, I begin with establishing as a fundamental principle, upon which all my subsequent pursuits and regulations are to be established, that the acquisition, at least, of a respectable reputation is (subject to the overruling power and wisdom of Providence,) within my own power; and that on my part nothing is wanting, but a constant and persevering determination to tread in the steps which naturally lead to honor. And, at the same time, I am equally convinced, that I never shall attain that credit in the world, which my nature directs me to wish, without such a steady, patient and persevering pursuit of the means adapted to the end I have in view, as has often been the subject of my speculation, but never of my practice.

'Labor and toil stand stern before the throne,  
And guard—so Jove commands—the sacred place.'

"The mode of life adopted almost universally by my cotemporaries and equals is by no means calculated to secure the object of my ambition. My emulation is seldom stimulated by observing the industry and application of those whom my situation in life gives me for companions. The pernicious and childish opinion that extraordinary genius cannot brook the slavery of plodding over the rubbish of antiquity (a cant so common among the heedless votaries of indolence), dulls the edge of all industry, and is one of the most powerful ingredients in the Circean potion which transforms many of the most promising young men into the beastly forms which, in sluggish idleness, feed upon the labors of others. The degenerate sentiment, I hope, will never obtain admission in my mind; and if my time should be loitered away in stupid laziness, it will be under the full conviction of my conscience that I am basely bartering the greatest benefits with which human beings can be indulged, for the miserable gratifications which are hardly worthy of contributing to the enjoyments of the brute creation.

"And as I have grounded myself upon the principle that my character is, under the smiles of heaven, to be the work of my own hands, it becomes necessary for me to determine upon what part of active or of speculative life I mean to rest my pretensions to eminence. My own situation and that of my country equally prohibit me from seeking to derive any present expectations from a public career. My disposition is not military; and, happily, the warlike talents are not those which

open the most pleasing or the most reputable avenue to fame. I have had some transient thoughts of undertaking some useful literary performance, but the pursuit would militate too much at present with that of the profession upon which I am to depend, not only for my reputation, but for my subsistence.

"I have, therefore, concluded that the most proper object of my present attention is that *profession itself*. And in acquiring the faculty to discharge the duties of it, in a manner suitable to my own wishes and the expectations of my friends, I find ample room for close and attentive application; for frequent and considerate observation; and for such benefits of practical experience as occasional opportunities may throw in my way."

Following out these sentiments—which we have given as presenting, like a mirror, the forecast of all his subsequent long and active, yet always studious life—Mr. Adams applied himself with renewed effort to whatever most strongly demanded his attention. In April, 1793, before Washington had published his proclamation of neutrality, or it was known that he contemplated doing it, Mr. Adams published in Boston three articles, signed Marcellus, strongly arguing that the United States ought to assume such a position, in the war then begun between England and France. In these papers he laid down his creed, as a statesman, in two great central principles, to which he has always steadfastly adhered—UNION among ourselves, and INDEPENDENCE of all entangling alliance, or implication, with the policy or condition of foreign states. In the winter of 1793-4, he published another series of papers, vindicating the course of President Washington in reference to the French minister, Genet. These writings, in connection with Mr. Adams' previous career, attracted the marked regard of Washington, and in 1794, he was appointed, without any intimation of such a design to him or to his father, Minister of the United States to the Netherlands. It appears that Mr. Jefferson, also, recommended him for this appointment. For a period, now of seven years, from 1794 to 1801, he was in Europe, in diplomatic missions to Holland, England and Prussia. Just before Washington retired from office, he appointed him Minister Plenipotentiary to Portugal. On his way to Lisbon, he received a new commission, changing his destination to Berlin. He continued there from November, 1797, to April, 1801, and concluded an important treaty of commerce with Prussia. At the close of his father's administration he returned home, arriving in Philadelphia in September, 1801.

In 1802, he was elected from Boston a member of the Massachusetts Senate, and soon after, by the legislature of that State, a Senator in Congress from the 4th of March, 1803. While a Senator in Congress he was appointed Professor of Rhetoric and Oratory in Harvard University, and his lectures were published in two octavo volumes, delivered in the recesses of Congress, attracted great attention, and gathered crowded and admiring audiences, in addition to academical hearers. His powers of elocution have always been pre-eminent, and the published lectures have been very widely read and admired. He resigned his seat in the Senate in 1808. In 1809, Madison sent him as Plenipotentiary to Russia.

While in Russia he furnished the *Port Folio*, edited in Philadelphia by the celebrated Joseph Dennie, and to which, from first to last, Mr. Adams was a frequent contributor, a series of letters, entitled, "Journal of a Tour through Silesia." They were republished in England, in an octavo volume, reviewed in the leading journals of the day, and afterwards translated into French and German.

While in Russia, his services were of vast importance, and produced effects upon our foreign relations, felt most beneficently to this day. By his instrumentality the Emperor of Russia was induced to mediate for peace between Great Britain and the United States, and President Madison named him at the head of the commissioners sent to negotiate the treaty which brought the war of 1812 to a close. This celebrated transaction took place at Ghent, in December, 1814. Henry Clay, and Albert Gallatin were in the same commission: after its conclusion he proceeded, accompanied by them, to London, and negotiated a convention of commerce with Great Britain. He was then appointed Minister Plenipotentiary at the court of St. James. There is a coincidence here quite worthy of remark. As the father, John Adams, took the leading part in negotiating the treaty with England at the close of the Revolutionary war, and was the first American ambassador in London, after that event, so the son was at the head of the negotiators who brought the second war with Great Britain to a close, and presented his creden-



tials, as the first American ambassador at that court, after the restoration of peace. In 1817, he was called home by President Monroe, to what is really the second office in the government, to be in the cabinet as Secretary of State.

This was the close of Mr. Adams' career as a foreign minister. It was, perhaps, the most brilliant, as it certainly was the most varied and interesting portion of his life. No representative of our country abroad has at all approached him, whether in the length of time his services were continued, the number of courts at which he attended, or the variety and importance of the advantages he achieved for the Republic. The fortunes of the commonwealth were just shaping themselves—a new nation was to assume a definite position and character by the side of other great powers, and it was a matter of moment to whose hands the foreign relations of the country should be committed. It was fortunate that the *early* Presidents of the United States entertained some adequate idea of what belonged to the dignity of the Government, and had discernment to see with whom so great interests abroad might safely be entrusted. Mr. Adams' first appointment, as Minister Plenipotentiary, was conferred on him by George Washington, and in accordance, moreover, with the strong recommendation of Thomas Jefferson. Madison, during his whole administration, committed to him the most important trusts, appointed him to represent the United States at the two most powerful courts in the world, St. Petersburg and St. James', and assigned him as the chief of that distinguished embassy, which arranged the treaty of peace with Great Britain. The encomium, in brief, which Washington pronounced upon him, when as early as 1797, he declared him "the most valuable public character we have abroad, and the ablest of all our diplomatic corps," is but the judgment that belongs to the whole long period of his public service in Europe.

The act of Mr. Monroe in placing him at the head of his cabinet, met with the fullest approval of the country. General Jackson, who had not yet learned to suffer headstrong prejudice to blind the eyes of a candid discernment, gave expression to that approbation in pronouncing him "the fittest person for the office; a man who would stand by his country in the hour of danger." The department of State was held by Mr. Adams during the whole of Monroe's administration, a period of eight years; and the duties of it were discharged with such ability and success, as greatly to increase the public confidence in him as a statesman and a patriot. Of the adjustment of the claims of Spain, the acquisition of Florida, and the recognition of the South American Republics, with many other important issues, effected under his influence, and the vast amount of labor, generally, which he expended in the service of the country, it will belong to his future biographer to present an adequate view to posterity.

In the Presidential election, which took place in the fall of 1824, Mr. Adams was one of four candidates. As no one of them received a majority of electoral votes, it was, of course, flung into the House of Representatives. On the 9th of February, 1825, the two Branches of Congress convened together in the Hall of the House, to open, count, and declare the electoral votes. Andrew Jackson was found to have 99 votes, John Quincy Adams, 84 votes, William H. Crawford, 41 votes, and Henry Clay, 37 votes. In accordance with the Constitution, the Senate then withdrew, and the House remained to cast ballots till a choice should be made. It was required to vote by States; the Constitution limited the election to the three candidates who had the highest electoral vote; and the balloting was to continue till a majority of the States had declared for one of the three. Mr. Adams having received as many popular votes as General Jackson, the fact that the latter had obtained a larger electoral vote did not have so much influence as would otherwise have belonged to it; so that at the moment of balloting it was entirely uncertain which would be successful. Thirteen States were necessary to a choice, the whole number being twenty-four. The ballots were thrown, and it was found that the six New England States, with New York, Maryland, Ohio, Kentucky, Illinois, Missouri and Louisiana, thirteen States, had declared for "John Quincy Adams, of Massachusetts;" and he was therefore duly elected President of the United States for four years, from the 4th of March, 1825. A Committee was then appointed to wait upon him with information of the result; who, the next day, reported the following in reply:

"GENTLEMEN:—In receiving this testimonial from the representatives of the people and States of this Union, I am deeply sensible of the circumstances under which it has been given. All my predecessors in the high station to which the favor of the House now calls me, have been honored with majorities of the electoral voices in their primary colleges. It has been my fortune to be placed, by the divisions of sentiment prevailing among our countrymen on this occasion, in competition, friendly and honorable, with three of my fellow-citizens, all justly enjoying, in eminent degrees, the public favor; and of whose worth, talents, and services, no one entertains a higher or more respectful sense than myself. The names of two of them were, in the fulfilment of the provisions of the Constitution, presented to the selection of the House, in concurrence with my own; names closely associated with the glory of the nation, and one of them further recommended by a larger minority of the primary electoral suffrages than mine. In this state of things, could my refusal to accept the trust, thus delegated to me, give an immediate opportunity to the people to form and to express, with a nearer approach to unanimity, the object of their preference, I should not hesitate to decline the acceptance of this eminent charge, and to submit the decision of this momentous question again to their determination. But the Constitution itself has not so disposed of the contingency which would arise in the event of my refusal; I shall therefore repair to the post assigned me by the call of my country, signified through her constitutional organs, oppressed with the magnitude of the task before me, but cheered with the hope of that generous support from my fellow-citizens, which, in the vicissitudes of a life devoted to their service, has never failed to sustain me; confident in the trust, that the wisdom of the Legislative Councils will guide and direct me in the path of my official duty, and relying, above all, upon the superintending Providence of that Being "in whose hands our breath is, and whose are all our ways."

"Gentlemen: I pray you to make acceptable to the House the assurance of my profound gratitude for their confidence, and to accept yourselves my thanks for the friendly terms in which you have communicated their decision.

"JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

"Washington, 10th February, 1825."

The administration of Mr. Adams, like every other portion of his life, was too crowded with matter for history to admit of comment here. That it met with severe opposition, open and secret, all know, who are conversant with the records of the times. That, in reality, it was eminently dignified, moderate, conciliatory towards foreign powers, and wisely regardful of the future welfare of the country, will be made manifest, we are equally certain, by the pens of historians in another generation.

Retiring from the Executive Chair in 1829, Mr. Adams, for the first time in a period of thirty-six years, passed into the quiet of a private life. It is impossible, however, for such men to hide away from the public eye. In 1831, the suffrages, nearly unanimous, of his native Congressional district, remanded him back to the service of the Commonwealth, electing him to a seat in the House of Representatives. The venerable ex-president accepted the appointment, and has since filled the office for fourteen successive years—not more, perhaps, from a fervent desire to serve the Republic, than from the fact, that his whole life, from the merest boyhood, having been passed before the world, among stirring movements and events, it has become to him, in a manner, the mode of existence. It might very well be doubted if he would enjoy half as good health or spirits in complete retirement.

But though thus, in his 78th year, still actively engaged in the public service, Mr. Adams yet pays the most diligent every-day attention to books. He has practised this, indeed, at all periods of his life, in the midst of the most important and engrossing occupations. A striking illustration, among many others, may be taken from the period of his administration. Harassed, as he was at that time, in addition to the usual Executive duties, with unremitting and violent opposition, distracted with various dissensions at home, as well as very difficult foreign relations, Mr. Adams still found time to draw up, for the improvement of his son, then a student at law, the most elaborate abstracts of the chief Orations of Cicero, and the Provencal Letters of Pascal. With such diligence, joined to a mind discursive yet perpetually observant, it is not wonderful that he should have acquired so vast a store of various information. The fields of knowledge which his intellect has traversed, and to which his memory can recur—especially in ancient literature, in history, and the many forms of philosophy—are immense. He has, above all, the most wide and thorough acquaintance with the social and political progress of the human race. It may safely be affirmed, that Mr. Adams knows more of the public and secret politics of all nations for the last hundred years than any man living.

As we have not attempted to write the biography of this remarkable man, so we would not attempt to portray his character. These belong to the future historian. Posterity will take sufficient care that these be not neglected. Whether every particular act of his, in a public life of half a century, any more than the whole career of any other man who has moved many years before the people, is completely defensible, may then be determined. That, however, notwithstanding the various jealousies, the personal and party asperities—ripening too often into bitter animosities—which have arisen from time to time in the turmoil of political contests, Mr. Adams has a larger share, than any man among us, of the affectionate respect of his countrymen, has been evinced, we think, by the universal public voice. Men who warmly differ with him, on great national or sectional questions, cannot fail to venerate him for his extensive knowledge, his eminent abilities, his long public services, his earnest integrity, and the fervent purity of his moral character. No better proof of this could be adduced, than the welcomes which greeted him everywhere, from city to city, on his journey to the West, some months since, to take part in a scientific celebration.

Mr. Adams is still in equable health and vigorous, walks with a short but firm and elastic step, and remains in perfect possession of all his intellectual faculties. No person who should see him breasting at sunrise the waters of the Potomac, as is his custom every day from the middle of spring till the middle of autumn, or traversing on foot, as he frequently does in the morning, before the sitting of the House commences, the entire distance of a mile and a half from his residence, near the President's, to the Capitol, would suppose that nearly eighty years of a most laborious life have passed over him. Certainly, any one listening to him speaking, fluently and clearly, an hour at a time on the floor of Congress, or conversing a whole evening without cessation, must be convinced that the powers of his mind are altogether unimpaired. He has a residence in Washington, and generally stays there till May, though the session may have closed before. In the summer and autumn he remains in his ancestral mansion, at Quincy. May he continue yet many years in the land he has so long honored, and go down to future time under that affectionate and venerable title, accorded him by his country—"THE OLD MAN ELOQUENT."

# THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

## JAMES MADISON.\*

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WHEN the imperial despot of Persia surveyed the myriads of his vassals, whom he had assembled for the invasion and conquest of Greece, we are told by the father of profane history,† that the monarch's heart, at first, distended with pride, but immediately afterwards sunk within him, and turned to tears of anguish at the thought, that within one hundred years from that day, not one of all the countless numbers of his host would remain in the land of the living.

The brevity of human life had afforded a melancholy contemplation to wiser and better men than Xerxes, in ages long before that of his own existence. It is still the subject of philosophical reflection or of Christian resignation, to the living man of the present age. It will continue such, so long as the race of man shall exist upon earth.

But it is the condition of our nature to look *before* and *after*. The Persian tyrant looked *forward*, and lamented the shortness of life; but in that century which bounded his mental vision, he knew not what was to come to pass, for weal or woe, to the race whose transitory nature he deplored, and his own purposes, happily baffled by the elements which he with absurd presumption would have chastised, were of the most odious and detestable character.

Reflections upon the shortness of time allotted to individual man upon this planet, may be turned to more useful account, by connecting them with ages past than with those that are to come. The family of man is placed upon this congregated ball to earn an improved condition hereafter by improving his own condition here—and this duty of improvement is not less

a social than a selfish principle. We are bound to exert all the faculties bestowed upon us by our Maker, to improve our own condition, by improving that of our fellow men; and the precepts that we should love our neighbor as ourselves, and that we should do to others as we would that they should do unto us, are but examples of that duty of co-operation to the improvement of his kind, which is the first law of God to man, unfolded alike in the volumes of nature and of inspiration.

Let us look *back* then for consolation from the thought of the shortness of human life, as urged upon us by the recent decease of JAMES MADISON, one of the pillars and ornaments of his country and of his age. His time on earth was short, yet he died full of years and of glory—less, far less than one hundred years have elapsed since the day of his birth—yet has he fulfilled, nobly fulfilled, his destinies as a man and a Christian. He has improved his own condition by improving that of his country and his kind.

He was born in Orange County, in the British Colony of Virginia, on the 5th of March, 1750; or according to the computation of time by the Gregorian Calendar, adopted the year after that of his birth, on the 16th of March, 1751, of a distinguished and opulent family; and received the early elements of education partly at a public school under the charge of Donald Robertson, and afterwards in the paternal mansion under the private tuition of the Rev. Thomas Martin, by whose instructions he was prepared for admission at Princeton College.

There are three stages in the history of the North American Revolution—the first of which may be considered as commencing with the or-

\* Written in 1836.

† Herodotus.



der of the British Council for enforcing the acts of trade in 1760, and as having reached its crisis at the meeting of the first Congress fourteen years after at Philadelphia. It was a struggle for the preservation and recovery of the rights and liberties of the British Colonies. It terminated in a civil war, the character and object of which were changed by the Declaration of Independence.

The second stage is that of the War of Independence, usually so called—but it began fifteen months before the Declaration, and was itself the immediate cause and not the effect of that event. It closed by the preliminary Treaty of Peace concluded at Paris on the 30th of November, 1782.

The third is the formation of the Anglo-American People and Nation of North America. This event was completed by the meeting of the first Congress of the United States under their present Constitution on the 4th of March, 1789. Thirty years is the usual computation for the duration of one generation of the human race. The space of time from 1760 to 1790 includes the generation with which the North American Revolution began, passed through all its stages, and ended.

The attention of the civilized European world, and perhaps an undue proportion of our own, has been drawn to the second of these three stages—to the contest with Great Britain for Independence. It was an arduous and apparently a very unequal conflict. But it was not without example in the annals of mankind. It has often been remarked that the distinction between rebellion and revolution consists only in the event, and is marked only by difference of success. But to a just estimate of human affairs there are other elementary materials of estimation. A revolution of government, to the leading minds by which it is undertaken, is an object to be accomplished. William Tell, Gustavus Vasa, William of Orange, had been the leaders of revolutions, the object of which had been the establishment or the recovery of popular liberties. But in neither of those cases had the part performed by those individuals been the result of deliberation or design. The sphere of action in all those cases was incomparably more limited and confined—the geographical dimensions of the scene narrow and contracted—the political principles brought into collision of small compass—no foundations of the social

compact to be laid—no people to be formed—the popular movement of the American Revolution had been preceded by a foreseeing and directing mind. I mean not to say by one mind; but by a pervading mind, which in a preceding age had inspired the prophetic verses of Berkley, and which may be traced back to the first Puritan settlers of Plymouth and of Massachusetts Bay. "From the first Institution of the Company of Massachusetts Bay," says Dr. Robertson, "its members seem to have been animated with a spirit of innovation in civil policy as well as in religion; and by the habit of rejecting established usages in the one, they were prepared for deviating from them in the other. They had applied for a royal charter, in order to give legal effect to their operations in England, as acts of a body politic; but the persons whom they sent out to America, as soon as they landed there, considered themselves as individuals, united together by voluntary association, possessing the natural right of men who form a society to adopt what mode of government and to enact what laws they deemed most conducive to general felicity."

And such had continued to be the prevailing spirit of the people of New England from the period of their settlement to that of the revolution. The people of Virginia, too, notwithstanding their primitive loyalty, had been trained to revolutionary doctrines and to warlike habits; by their frequent collisions with Indian wars; by the convulsions of Bacon's rebellion, and by the wars with France, of which their own borders were the theatre, down to the close of the war which immediately preceded that of the revolution. The contemplation and the defiance of danger, a qualification for all great enterprise and achievement upon earth, was from the very condition of their existence, a property almost universal to the British Colonists in North America; and hardihood of body, unfettered energy of intellect and intrepidity of spirit, fitted them for trials, which the feeble and enervated races of other ages and climes could never have gone through.

For the three several stages of this new Epocha in the earthly condition of man, a superintending Providence had ordained that there should arise from the native population of the soil, individuals with minds organized and with spirits trained to the exigencies of the times, and to the successive aspects of the social



state. In the contest of principle which originated with the attempt of the British Government to burden their Colonies with taxation by act of Parliament, the natural rights of mankind found efficient defenders in James Otis, Patrick Henry, John Dickinson, Josiah Quincy, Benjamin Franklin, Arthur Lee and numerous other writers of inferior note. As the contest changed its character, Samuel and John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were among the first who raised the standard of Independence and prepared the people for the conflict through which they were to pass. For the contest of physical force by arms, Washington, Charles Lee, Putnam, Green, Gates, and a graduation of others of inferior ranks had been prepared by the preceding wars—by the conquest of Canada and by the previous capture of Louisburg. From the beginning of the war, every action was disputed with the perseverance and tenacity of veteran combatants, and the minute men of Lexington and Bunker's Hill were as little prepared for flight at the onset as the Macedonian phalanx of Alexander or the tenth legion of Julius Cæsar.

But the great work of the North American revolution was not in the maintenance of the rights of the British Colonies by argument, nor in the conflict of physical force by war. The Declaration of Independence annulled the national character of the American people. That character had been common to them all as subjects of one and the same sovereign, and that sovereign was a king. The dissolution of that tie was pronounced by one act common to them all, and it left them as members of distinct communities in the relations towards each other, bound only by the obligations of the law of nature and of the Union, by which they had renounced their connexion with the mother country.

But what was to be the condition of their national existence? This was the problem of difficult solution for them; and this was the opening of the new era in the science of government and in the history of mankind.

Their municipal governments were founded upon the common law of England, modified by their respective charters; by the Parliamentary law of England so far as it had been adopted by their usages, and by the enactments of their own Legislative assemblies. This was a complicated system of law, and has formed a sub-

ject of much internal perplexity to many of the States of the Union, and in several of them continues unadjusted to this day. By the common consent of all, however, this was reserved for the separate and exclusive regulation of each state within itself.

As a member of the community of nations, it was also agreed that they should constitute one body—"E Pluribus Unum" was the device which they assumed as the motto for their common standard. And there was one great change from their former condition, which they adopted with an unanimity so absolute, that no proposition of a different character was ever made before them. It was that all their governments should be republican. They were determined not only to be separately republics, but to tolerate no other form of government as constituting a part of their community. A natural consequence of this determination was that they should remain separate independences, and the first suggestion which presented itself to them, was that their Union should be merely a confederation.

In the first and in the early part of the second stage of the revolution, the name of JAMES MADISON had not appeared. At the commencement of the contest he was but ten years of age. When the first blood was shed, here in the streets of Boston, he was a student in the process of his education at Princeton College, where the next year, 1771, he received the degree of Bachelor of Arts. He was even then so highly distinguished by the power of application and the rapidity of his progress, that he performed all the exercises of the two senior Collegiate years in one—while at the same time his deportment was so exemplary, that Dr. Witherspoon, then at the head of that College, and afterwards himself one of the most eminent Patriots and Sages of our revolution, always delighted in bearing testimony to the excellency of his character at that early stage of his career; and said to Thomas Jefferson long afterwards, when they were all colleagues in the revolutionary Congress, that in the whole career of Mr. MADISON at Princeton, he had never known him to say or do an indiscreet thing.

Discretion in its influence upon the conduct of men is the parent of moderate and conciliatory counsels, and these were peculiarly indispensable to the perpetuation of the American

Union, and to the prosperous advancement and termination of the revolution, precisely at the period when Mr. Madison was first introduced into public life.

In 1775, among the earliest movements of the revolutionary contest, he was a member of the Committee of Public Safety of the County of Orange, and in 1776, of the Convention substituted for the ordinary Legislature of the Colony. By one of those transient caprices of popular favour, which sometimes influence elections, he was not returned to the House of Delegates in 1777, but was immediately after elected by that body to the Executive Council, of which he continued a leading member till the close of the year 1779, and was then transferred by the Legislature to the representation of the Commonwealth in the Continental Congress. His first entrance into public life was signalized by the resolution of the Convention of the State, instructing their Delegates to vote for the Independence of the Colonies; by the adoption of a declaration of rights, and by their organization of a State government, which continued for more than half a century the Constitution of the Commonwealth before it underwent the revision of the people; an event in which he was destined again to take a conspicuous part. On the 20th of March, 1780, he took his seat as a delegate in the Congress of the Confederation. It was then in the midst of the revolution, and under the influence of its most trying scenes, that his political character was formed; and then it was that the virtue of discretion, the spirit of moderation, the conciliatory temper of compromise found room for exercise in its most comprehensive extent.

One of the provisions in the articles of Confederation most strongly marked with that same spirit of Liberty, the vital breath of the contest in which our fathers were engaged; the true and undying conservative spirit by which we their children enjoy that Freedom which they achieved; but which like all other pure and virtuous principles sometimes leads to error by its excess, was that no member of this omnipotent Congress should hold that office more than three years in six. This provision, however, was construed not to have commenced its operation until the final ratification of the articles by all the States on the first of March, 1781. Mr. Madison remained in Congress nearly four years, from the 20th of March,

1780, till the first Monday in November, 1783. He was thus a member of that body during the last stages of the revolutionary war and for one year after the conclusion of the Peace. He had, during that period, unceasing opportunities to observe the mortifying inefficiency of the merely federative principle upon which the Union of the States had been organized, and had taken an active part in all the remedial measures proposed by Congress for amending the Articles of Confederation.

A Confederation is not a country. There is no magnet of attraction in any league of Sovereign and Independent States which causes the heart-strings of the individual man to vibrate in unison with those of his neighbour. Confederates are not Countrymen, as the tie of affinity by convention can never be so close as the tie of kindred by blood. The Confederation of the North American States was an experiment of inestimable value, even by its failure. It taught our fathers the lesson, that they had more, infinitely more to do than merely to achieve their Independence by war. That they must form their social compact upon principles never before attempted upon earth. That the Achean league of ancient days, the Hanseatic league of the middle ages, the leagues of Switzerland or of the Netherlands of later times, furnished no precedent upon which they could safely build their labouring plan of State. The Confederation was perhaps as closely knit together as it was possible that such a form of polity could be grappled; but it was matured by the State Legislatures without consultation with the People, and the jealousy of sectional collisions, and the distrust of all delegation of power, stamped every feature of the work with inefficiency.

The deficiency of powers in the Confederation was immediately manifested in their inability to regulate the commerce of the country, and to raise revenue, indispensable for the discharge of the debt accumulated in the progress of the Revolution. Repeated efforts were made to supply this deficiency; but always without success.

On the 3d of February, 1781, it was recommended to the several States as indispensably necessary that they should vest a power in Congress to levy for the use of the United States a duty of five per cent. ad valorem upon foreign importations, and all prize goods con-

demned in a Court of Admiralty; the money arising from those duties to be appropriated to the discharge of the debts contracted for the support of the War.

On the 18th of April, 1783, a new recommendation was adopted by Resolutions of nine States, as indispensably necessary to the restoration of public credit, and to the punctual and honorable discharge of the public debt, to invest the Congress with a power to lay certain specific duties upon spirituous liquors, tea, sugar, coffee and cocoa, and five per cent. *ad valorem* upon all other imported articles of merchandise, to be exclusively appropriated to the payment of the principal or interest of the public debt.

And that as a further provision for the payment of the interest of the debt, the States themselves should levy a revenue to furnish their respective quotas of an aggregate annual sum of one million five hundred thousand dollars.

And that to provide a further guard for the payment of the same debts, to hasten their extinguishment, and to establish the harmony of the United States, the several States should make liberal cessions to the Union of their territorial claims.

With this act a Committee, consisting of Mr. MADISON, Mr. Ellsworth and Mr. Hamilton, was appointed to prepare an address to the States, which on the 26th of the same month was adopted, and transmitted together with eight documentary papers, demonstrating the necessity that the measures recommended by the act should be adopted by the States.

This address, one of those incomparable State papers which more than all the deeds of arms immortalized the rise, progress and termination of the North American revolution, was the composition of JAMES MADISON. After compressing into a brief and luminous summary all the unanswerable arguments to induce the restoration and maintenance of the public faith, it concluded with the following solemn and prophetic admonition:

"Let it be remembered, that it has ever been the pride and boast of America, that the rights for which she contended, were the rights of human nature. By the blessing of the Author of these rights on the means exerted for their defence, they have prevailed over all opposition, and form the basis of thirteen independent States.

No instance has heretofore occurred, nor can any instance be expected hereafter to occur, in which the unadulterated forms of republican Government can pretend to so fair an opportunity of justifying themselves by their fruits. In this view the citizens of the United States are responsible for the greatest trust ever confided to a political society. If justice, good faith, honor, gratitude and all the other qualities which ennoble the character of a nation, and fulfil the ends of Government be the fruits of our establishments, the cause of Liberty will acquire a dignity and lustre which it has never yet enjoyed; and an example will be set which cannot but have the most favorable influence on the rights of mankind. If, on the other side, our Governments should be unfortunately blotted with the reverse of these cardinal and essential virtues, the great cause which we have engaged to vindicate will be dishonored and betrayed; the last and fairest experiment in favor of the rights of human nature will be turned against them; and their patrons and friends exposed to be insulted and silenced by the votaries of tyranny and usurpation."

My countrymen! do not your hearts burn within you at the recital of these words, when the retrospect brings to your minds the time when, and the persons by whom they were spoken? Compare them with the closing paragraphs of the address from the first Congress of 1774, to your forefathers, the people of the Colonies.

"Your own salvation and that of your posterity now depends upon yourselves. Against the temporary inconveniences you may suffer from a stoppage of Trade, you will weigh in the opposite balance the endless miseries you and your descendants must endure from an established arbitrary power. You will not forget the Honor of your Country that must, from your behavior, take its title in the estimation of the world to Glory or to Shame; and you will with the deepest attention reflect, that if the peaceable mode of opposition recommended by us be broken and rendered ineffectual, you must inevitably be reduced to choose either a more dangerous contest, or a final ruinous and infamous submission. We think ourselves bound in duty to observe to you that the schemes agitated against these Colonies have been so conducted as to render it prudent that



you should extend your views to mournful events and be in all respects prepared for every contingency."

That was the trumpet of summons to the conflict of the revolution; as the address of April, 1783 was the note of triumph at its close. They were the first and the last words of the Spirit, which in the germ of the Colonial contest, brooded over its final fruit, the universal emancipation of civilized man.

Compare them both with the opening and closing paragraphs of the Declaration of Independence, too deeply riveted in your memories to need the repetition of them by me; and you have the unity of action essential to all heroic achievement for the benefit of mankind, and you have the character from its opening to its close; the beginning, the middle and the end of that unexampled, and yet unimitated moral and political agent, the Revolutionary North American Congress.

But the Address of 1783 marks the commencement of one era in American History as well as the close of another. MADISON, ELLSWORTH, HAMILTON, were not of the Congress of 1774, nor yet of the Congress which declared Independence. They were of a succeeding generation, men formed in and by the revolution itself. They had imbibed the Spirit of the revolution, but the nature of their task was changed. Theirs was no longer the duty to call upon their countrymen to extend their views to mournful events, and to prepare themselves for every contingency. But more emphatically than even the Congress of 1774, were they required to warn their fellow citizens that their salvation and that of their posterity depended upon themselves.

The warfare of self defence against foreign oppression was accomplished. Independence, unqualified, commercial and political, was achieved and recognised. But there was yet in substance no nation—no people—no country common to the Union. These had been self-formed in the heat of the common struggle for freedom; and evaporated in the very success of the energies they had inspired. A Confederation of separate State Sovereignities, never sanctioned by the body of the people, could furnish no effective Government for the nation. A cold and lifeless indifference to the rights, the interests, and the duties of the Union had fallen like a palsy upon all their faculties in-

stead of that almost supernatural vigor which, at the origin of their contest, had inscribed upon their banners, and upon their hearts, "join or die."

In November, 1783, Mr. MADISON's constitutional term of service in Congress, as limited by the restriction in the articles of Confederation, expired. But his talents were not lost to his Country. He was elected the succeeding year a member of the Legislature of his native State, and continued by annual election in that station till November, 1786, when having become re-eligible to Congress, he was again returned to that body, and on the 12th of February, 1787, resumed his seat among its members.

In the Legislature of Virginia, his labors, during his absence of three years from the general councils of the Confederacy, were not less arduous and unremitting, nor less devoted to the great purposes of revolutionary legislation, than while he had been in Congress. The Colony of Virginia had been settled under the auspices of the Episcopal Church of England. It was there the established Church; and all other religious denominations, there, as in England, were stigmatised with the name of dissenters. For the support of this Church the Colonial laws prior to the revolution had subjected to taxation all the inhabitants of the Colony, and it had been endowed with grants of property by the Crown. The effect of this had naturally been to render the Church establishment unpopular, and the clergy of that Establishment generally unfriendly to the revolution. After the close of the War, in the year 1784, Mr. Jefferson introduced into the Legislature a Bill for the establishment of Religious Freedom. The principle of the Bill was the abolition of all taxation for the support of Religion, or of its Ministers, and to place the freedom of all religious opinions wholly beyond the control of the Legislature. These purposes were avowed, and supported by a long argumentative preamble. The Bill failed however to obtain the assent of the Assembly, and instead of it they prepared and caused to be printed a Bill establishing a provision for teachers of the Christian Religion. At the succeeding session of the Legislature, Mr. Jefferson was absent from the country, but Mr. MADISON, as the champion of Religious Liberty, supplied his place. A memorial and Remonstrance against the Bill making provision for the teach-

ers of the Christian Religion was composed by Mr. MADISON, and signed by multitudes of the citizens of the Commonwealth, and the Bill drafted by Mr. Jefferson, together with its preamble, was by the influence of his friend triumphantly carried against all opposition through the Legislature.

The principle that religious opinions are altogether beyond the sphere of legislative control, is but one modification of a more extensive axiom, which includes the unlimited freedom of the press, of speech, and of the communication of thought in all its forms. An authoritative provision by law for the support of teachers of the Christian Religion was prescribed by the third Article of the Bill of Rights in the Constitution of this Commonwealth. An amendment recently adopted by the people has given their sanction to the opinions of Jefferson and MADISON, and the substance of the Virginian Statute for the establishment of Religious Freedom, now forms a part of the Constitution of Massachusetts. That the freedom and communication of thought is paramount to all legislative authority, is a sentiment becoming from day to day more prevalent throughout the civilized world, and which it is fervently to be hoped will henceforth remain inviolate by the legislative authorities not only of the Union, but of all its confederated States.

At the Session of 1785, a general revisal was made of the Statute Laws of Virginia, and the great burden of the task devolved upon Mr. MADISON as chairman of the Judiciary Committee of the House. The general principle which pervaded this operation was the adaptation of the civil code of the Commonwealth, to its republican and unfettered independence as a Sovereign State, and he carried it through with that same spirit of liberty and liberality which had dictated the Act for the establishment of Religious Freedom. The untiring industry, the searching and penetrating application, the imperturbable patience, the moderation and gentleness of disposition, which smoothed his way over the ruggedest and most thorny paths of life, accompanied him through this transaction as through all the rest. While a member of the Legislature of Virginia, he had contributed more than any other person to the adjustment of that vital interest of the Union, the disposal of the Public Lands. It was the collision of opinions and of interests relating to

them which had delayed the conclusion of the Articles of Confederation; and the cession afterwards made of the North Western Territory was encumbered with conditions which further delayed its acceptance. By the influence of Mr. MADISON, the terms of the cession were so modified, that in conformity with them the ordinance for the government of the North Western Territory was finally adopted and established by Congress on the 13th of July, 1787, in the midst of the labors of the Convention at Philadelphia, which two months later presented to the *People* of the United States for their acceptance, that Constitution of Government, thenceforth the polar star of their Union.

The experience of four years in the Congress of the Confederation, had convinced Mr. MADISON that the Union could not be preserved by means of that institution. That its inherent infirmity was a deficiency of power in the federal head, and that an insurmountable objection to the grant of further powers to Congress, always arose from the adverse prejudices and jealousy with which the demand of them was urged by that body itself. The difficulty of obtaining such grant of power, was aggravated by the consideration that it was to be invested in those by whom it was solicited, and was at the same time, and in the same degree, to abridge the power of those by whom it was to be granted.

To avoid these obstacles it occurred to Mr. MADISON that the agency of a distinct, delegated body, having no invidious interest of its own, or of its members, might be better adapted, deliberately to discuss the deficiencies of the federal compact, than the body itself by whom it was administered. The friends with whom he consulted in the Legislature of Virginia, concurred with him in these opinions, and the motion for the appointment of Commissioners to consider of the state of *trade* in the confederacy suggested by him, was made in the Legislature by his friend, Mr. Tyler, and carried by the weight of his opinions, and the exertion of his influence, without opposition.

This proposition was made and Commissioners were appointed by the Legislature of Virginia, on the 21st of January, 1786. The Governor of the Commonwealth, Edmund Randolph, was placed at the head of the delegation from the State. Mr. MADISON and six others, men of the first character and influence in the

State, were the other Commissioners. The meeting was held at Annapolis in September, and two Commissioners from New York, three from New Jersey, one from Pennsylvania, three from Delaware, and three from Virginia, constituted the whole number of this Convention. Five States only were represented, and among them, Pennsylvania by a single member. Four States, among whom was Maryland, the very State within which the Assembly was held, had not even appointed Commissioners, and the deputies from four others, among whom was our own beloved, native Commonwealth, suffering, even then, the awful calamity of a civil war, generated by the imbecility of the federal compact of union, did not even think it worth while to give their attendance.

Yet even in that Convention of Annapolis, was the germ of a better order of things. The Commissioners elected John Dickinson, of Delaware, their chairman, and after a session of three days, agreed upon a report, doubtless drafted by Mr. MADISON,—addressed to the Legislatures by which they had been appointed, and copies of which were transmitted to the other State Legislatures and to Congress.

In this report they availed themselves of a suggestion derived from the powers which the Legislature of New Jersey had conferred upon their Commissioners, and which contemplated a more enlarged revision of the Articles of Confederation; and they urgently recommended that a second convention of delegates, to which all the States should be invited to appoint Commissioners, should be held at Philadelphia, on the second Monday of the next May, for a general revival of the *Constitution* of the Federal Government, to render it adequate to the exigencies of the Union, and to report to Congress an act, which, when agreed to by them and confirmed by all the State Legislatures, *should* effectually provide for the same. In this report first occurred the use of the terms *Constitution of the Federal Government* as applied to the United States—and the sentiment was avowed that it should be made adequate to the exigencies of the Union. There was, however, yet no proposal for recurring to the great body of the people.

The recommendation of the report was repeated by Congress without direct reference to it, upon a resolution offered by the delegation of Massachusetts, founded upon a proviso in

the Articles of Confederation and upon instructions from the State of New York to their delegates in Congress, and upon the suggestion of several States. The Convention assembled accordingly at Philadelphia, on the 9th of May, 1787.

In most of the inspirations of genius, there is a simplicity, which, when they are familiarized to the general understanding of men by their effects, detracts from the opinion of their greatness. That the people of the British Colonies, who, by their united counsels and energies had achieved their independence, should continue to be one people, and constitute a nation under the form of one organized government, was an idea, in itself so simple, and addressed itself at once so forcibly to the reason, to the imagination, and to the benevolent feelings of all, that it can scarcely be supposed to have escaped the mind of any reflecting man from Maine to Georgia. It was the dictate of nature. But no sooner was it conceived than it was met by obstacles innumerable to the general mass of mankind. They resulted from the existing social institutions, diversified among the parties to the projected national union, and seeming to render it impracticable. There were chartered rights for the maintenance of which the war of the revolution itself had first been waged. There were State Sovereignities, corporate feudal baronies, tenacious of their own liberty, impatient of a superior, and jealous and disdainful of a paramount Sovereign, even in the whole democracy of the nation. There were collisions of boundary and of proprietary right westward in the soil—southward, in its cultivator. In fine the diversities of interests, of opinions, of manners, of habits, and even of extraction were so great, that the plan of constituting them one People, appears not to have occurred to any of the members of the Convention before they were assembled together.

It was earnestly contested in the Convention itself. A large proportion of the members adhered to the principle of merely revising the articles of the Confederation and of vesting the powers of Government in the confederate Congress. A proposition to that effect was made by Mr. Patterson of New Jersey, in a series of Resolutions, offered as a substitute for those of Mr. Randolph, immediately after the first discussions upon them.

Nearly four months of anxious deliberation were employed by an assembly composed of the men who had been the most distinguished for their services civil and military, in conducting the country through the arduous struggles of the revolution—of men who to the fire of genius added all the lights of experience, and were stimulated by the impulses at once of ardent patriotism and of individual ambition, aspiring to that last and most arduous labor of constituting a nation destined in after times to present a model of Government for all the civilized nations of the earth. On the 17th of September 1787, they reported.

When the substance of their work was gone through, a Committee of five members, of whom Mr. MADISON was one, was appointed to revise the style, and to arrange the Articles which had been agreed to by the Convention; and this Committee was afterwards charged with the preparation of an address to the People of the United States.

The address to the People was reported in the form of a letter from Washington, the President of the Convention, to the President of Congress; a Letter, admirable for the brevity and the force with which it presents the concentrated argument for the great change of their condition, which they called upon their fellow citizens to sanction. And this Letter, together with an addition of two or three lines in the preamble, reported by the same Committee, did indeed comprise the most powerful appeal that could sway the heart of man, ever exhibited to the contemplation and to the hopes of the human race.

It did not escape the notice or the animadversion of the adversaries to this new national organization. They were at the time when the Constitution was promulgated, perhaps more numerous, and scarcely less respectable, than the adherents to the Constitution themselves. They had also, in the management of the discussion, almost all the popular side of the argument.

Government in the first and most obvious aspect which it assumes, is a restraint upon human action, and as such, a restraint upon Liberty. The Constitution of the United States was intended to be a government of great energy, and of course of extensive restriction not only upon individual Liberty but upon the corporate action of States claiming to be Sovereign and

Independent. The Convention had been aware that such restraints upon the People, could be imposed by no earthly power other than the People themselves. They were aware that to induce the People to impose upon themselves such binding ligaments, motives not less cogent than those which form the basis of human association were indispensably necessary. That the first principles of politics must be indissolubly linked with the first principles of morals. They assumed therefore the existence of a People of the United States, and made them declare the Constitution to be their own work—speaking in the first person and saying *We, the People* of the United States, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America—and then the allegation of motives—to form a more perfect union, to establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our posterity. These are precisely the purposes for which it has pleased the Author of nature to make man a sociable being, and has blended into one his happiness with that of his kind.

So cogent were these motives and so forcibly were they compressed within the compass of this preamble, and in the Letter from President Washington to the President of Congress, that this body immediately and unanimously adopted the resolutions of the Convention, recommending that the projected Constitution should be transmitted to the Legislatures of the several States, to be by them submitted to Conventions of Delegates, to be chosen in each State by the People thereof, under the recommendation of its Legislature, for their assent and ratification. This unanimity of Congress is perhaps the strongest evidence ever manifested of the utter contempt into which the Articles of Confederation had fallen. The Congress which gave its unanimous sanction to the measure was itself to be annihilated by the Constitution thus proposed. The Articles of Confederation were to be annihilated with it. Yet all the members of the Congress so ready to sanction its dissolution, had been elected by virtue of those Articles of Confederation—to them the faith of all the States had been pledged, and they had expressly prescribed that no alteration of them should be adopted, but by the unanimous consent of the States.



Thus far the proposal first made by Mr. MADISON in the Legislature of Virginia, for the new political organization of the Union, had been completely successful. A People of the United States was formed. A Government, Legislative, Executive and Judicial was prepared for them, and by a daring though unavoidable anticipation, had been declared by its authors to be the Ordinance of that people themselves. It could be made so only by their adoption. But the greatest labor still remained to be performed. The people throughout the Union were suffering, but a vast proportion of them were unaware of the cause of the evil that was preying upon their vitals. A still greater number were bewildered in darkness in search of a remedy, and there were not wanting those among the most ardent and zealous votaries of Freedom, who instead of adding to the powers of the general Congress, inefficient and imbecile as they were, inclined rather to redeem the confederacy from the forlorn condition to which it was reduced, by stripping the Congress of the pittance of power which they possessed. In the indulgence of this spirit the Delegates from our own Commonwealth of Massachusetts, by express instructions from their constituents, moved a Resolution that the election and acceptance of any person as a member of Congress should forever thereafter be deemed to disqualify such person from being elected by Congress to any office of trust or profit under the United States, for the term for which he should have been elected a member of that body.

This morbid terror of patronage, this patriotic anxiety lest corruption should creep in by appointments of members of Congress to office under the authorities of the Union, has often been reproduced down even to recent days under the present Government of the Union. Upon the theories or the practice of the present age, it is not the time or the place here to comment. But we cannot forbear to remark upon the solicitude of our venerable forefathers in this Commonwealth, to remedy the imperfection of the Articles of Confederation, the abuses of power, by the Congress of that day, and the avenues to corruption by the appointment of their members to office, when we consider that under the exclusions thus proposed, Washington could never have commanded the armies of the United States: That neither Franklin, John

Adams, Arthur Lee, John Jay, Henry Laurens, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Morris, nor Robert R. Livingston could have served them as ministers abroad, or in any ministerial capacity at home—and when we reflect that two public Ministers in Europe with their Secretaries, one Secretary of Foreign Affairs, one Secretary of War and three Commissioners of an empty Treasury, constituted the whole list of lucrative offices, civil and military, which they had to bestow.

This incident may serve as an illustration of the difficulties which were yet to be encountered before the People of the United States could be prevailed upon to fix their seal of approbation upon a constitution issued in their name, and which granted to a central Government, destined to rule over them all, powers of energy surpassing those of the most absolute monarchy, and forming, in the declared opinion of Jefferson, the strongest Government in the world.

In a people inhabiting so great an extent of Territory, the difficulties to be surmounted before they could be persuaded to adopt this Constitution, were aggravated both by their dissensions and by their agreements—by the diversity of their interests and the community of their principles. The collision of interests strongly tended to alienate them from one another, and all were alike imbued with a deep aversion to any unnecessary grant of power. The Constitution was no sooner promulgated, than it was assailed in the public journals from all quarters of the Union.

The Convention was boldly and not unjustly charged with having transcended their powers, and the Congress of the Confederation, were censured in no measured terms for having even referred it to the State Legislatures, to be submitted to the consideration of Conventions of the People.

The Congress of the Confederation were in session at New York. Several of its members had been at the same time members of the Convention at Philadelphia—and among them were JAMES MADISON and Alexander Hamilton. John Jay was not then a member of Congress nor had he been a member of the Convention—but he was the Secretary of Congress for foreign affairs and had held that office, from the time of his return from Europe, immediately after the conclusion of the definitive Treaty of Peace. He had therefore felt in its most painful form the



imbecility of the Confederacy of which he was the minister, equally incapable of contracting engagements with foreign powers with the consciousness of the power to fulfil them, or of energy to hold foreign nations to the responsibility of performing the engagements contracted on their part with the United States. New York, then the central point of the confederacy, was the spot whence the most effective impression could be made by cool, dispassionate argument on the public mind; and in the midst of the tempest of excitement throughout the country occasioned by the sudden and unexpected promulgation of a system so totally different from that of the Confederation, these three persons undertook in concert, by a series of popular Essays published in the daily journals of the time, to review the system of the confederation, to demonstrate its inaptitude not only to all the functions of Government, but even to the preservation of the Union, and the necessity of an establishment at least as energetic as the proposed Constitution to the very existence of the United States as a Nation.

The papers under the signature of Publius were addressed to the People of the State of New York, and the introductory Essay, written by Hamilton, declared the purpose to discuss all topics of interest connected with the adoption of the Constitution. The utility of the Union to the prosperity of the People: The insufficiency of the Confederation to preserve that Union: The necessity of an energetic Government: The conformity of the proposed Constitution to the true principles of a republican Government: Its analogy to the Constitution of the State of New York, and the additional security which its adoption would afford to the preservation of republican Government, to liberty and to property. The fulfilment of this purpose was accomplished in eighty six numbers, frequently since republished, and now constituting a classical work in the English language, and a commentary upon the Constitution of the United States, of scarcely less authority than the Constitution itself. Written in separate numbers, and in very unequal proportions, it has not indeed that entire unity of design, or execution which might have been expected, had it been the production of a single mind. Nearly two thirds of the papers were written by Mr. Hamilton. Nearly one third by Mr. MADISON, and five numbers only by Mr. Jay.

In the distribution of the several subjects embraced in the plan of the work, the inducements to adopt the Constitution arising from the relations of the Union with foreign nations, were presented by Mr. Jay; the defects of the Confederation in this respect were so obvious, and the evil consequences flowing from them, were so deeply and universally felt, that the task was of comparative ease, and brevity, with that of the other two contributors. The defects of the Confederation were indeed a copious theme for them all; and in the analysis of them, for the exposition of their bearing on the Legislation of the several States, the two principal writers treated the subject so as to interlace with each other. The 18th, 19th and 20th numbers are the joint composition of both. In examining closely the points selected by these two great co-operators to a common cause, and their course of argument for its support, it is not difficult to perceive that diversity of genius and of character which afterwards separated them so widely from each other on questions of political interest, affecting the construction of the Constitution which they so ably defended, and so strenuously urged their countrymen to adopt. The ninth and tenth numbers are devoted to the consideration of the utility of the Union as a safeguard against domestic faction and insurrection. They are rival dissertations upon faction and its remedy. The propensity of all free governments to the convulsions of faction is admitted by both. The advantages of a confederated republic of extensive dimensions to control this admitted and unavoidable evil, are insisted on with equal energy in both—but the ninth number, written by Hamilton, draws its principal illustrations from the history of the Grecian Republics; while the tenth, written by MADISON, searches for the disease and for its remedies in the nature and the faculties of *Man*. There is in each of these numbers a disquisition of critical and somewhat metaphysical refinement. That of Hamilton, upon a distinction, which he pronounces more subtle than accurate, between a *confederacy* and *consolidation* of the States. That of MADISON upon the difference between a *Democracy* and a *Republic*, as differently affected by Faction—meaning by a Democracy, a Government administered by the People themselves, and by a Republic, a Government by elective representation. These distinctions in both cases have,

in our experience of the administration of the general Government, assumed occasional importance, and formed the elements of warm and obstinate party collisions.

The fourteenth number of the *Federalist*, the next in the series written by Mr. MADISON, is an elaborate answer to an objection which had been urged against the Constitution, drawn from the extent of country then comprised within the United States. From the deep anxiety pervading the whole of this paper, and a most eloquent and pathetic appeal to the spirit of union, with which it concludes, it is apparent that the objection itself was in the mind of the writer, of the most formidable and plausible character. He encounters it with all the acuteness of his intellect and all the energy of his heart. His chief argument is a recurrence to his distinction between a Republic and a Democracy—and next to that by an accurate definition of the boundaries within which the United States were then comprised. The range between the 31st and 45th degree of North Latitude, the Atlantic and the Mississippi—he contends that *such* an extent of territory, with the great improvements which were to be expected in the facilities of communication between its remotest extremes, was *not* incompatible with the existence of a confederated republic—or at least that from the vital interest of the people of the Union, and of the Liberties of mankind in the success of the American Revolution, it was worthy of an experiment yet untried in the annals of the world.

The question to what extent of territory a confederate Republic, under one general government may be adopted, without breaking into fragments by its own weight, or settling into a monarchy, subversive of the liberties of the people, is yet of transcendent interest, and of fearful portent to the people of the Union. The Constitution of the United States was formed for a people inhabiting a territory confined to narrow bounds, compared with those which can scarcely be said to confine them now. The acquisition of Louisiana and of Florida have more than doubled our domain; and our settlements and our treaties have already removed our Western boundaries from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean. A colonial establishment of immense extent still hangs upon our Northern borders, and another confederate Republic, seems to offer the most

alluring spoils to our ambition and avarice at the South. The idea of embracing in one confederated government the whole continent of North America, has, at this day, nothing chimerical in its conception, and long before a lapse of time equal to that which has past since the 14th number of the *Federalist* was written, may require the invincible spirit and the uncompromising energy of our revolutionary struggle for its solution.

The other papers of the *Federalist*, written by Mr. MADISON, are from the 37th to the 58th number inclusive. They relate to the difficulties which the Convention had experienced in the formation of a proper plan. To its conformity with Republican principles, with an apologetic defence of the body for transcending their powers. To a general view of the powers vested by the plan in the general government, and a comparative estimate of the reciprocal influence of the general and of the State governments with each other. They contain a laborious investigation of the maxims which require a separation of the departments of power, and a discussion of the means for giving to it practical efficacy—and they close with an examination, critical and philosophical, of the organization of the House of Representatives in the Constitution of the United States—with reference to the qualifications of the electors and the elected—to the term of service of the members; to the ratio of representation; to the total number of the body; and to the expected subsequent augmentation of the members—and here he met and refuted an objection to the plan founded upon its supposed tendency to elevate the few above the many. These were the topics discussed by JAMES MADISON, and in leaving to his illustrious associate the development of the other Departments of the Senate, of the Executive, of the Judiciary, and the bearing of the whole system upon the militia, the commerce and revenues, the military and naval establishments, and to the public economy, it was doubtless because both from inclination and principle he preferred the consideration of those parts of the instrument which bore upon popular right, and the freedom of the citizens, to that of the aristocratic and monarchical elements of the whole fabric.

The papers of the *Federalist* had a powerful, but limited influence upon the public mind. The constitution was successively submitted

to Conventions of the People, in each of the thirteen States, and in almost every one of them was debated against oppositions of deep feeling, and strong party excitement. The authors of the *Federalist* were again called to buckle on their armour in defence of their plan. The Convention for the Commonwealth of Virginia, met in June, 1788, nine months after the Constitution had been promulgated. It had already been ratified by seven of the States, and New Hampshire, at an adjourned session of her Convention, adopted it while the Convention of Virginia were in session. The assent of that State was therefore to complete the number of nine, which the Constitution itself had provided should be sufficient for undertaking its execution between the ratifying States. A deeper interest was then involved in the decision of Virginia, than in that of any other member of the Confederacy, and in no State had the opposition to the plan been so deep, so extensive, so formidable as there. Two of her citizens, second only to Washington by the weight of their characters, the splendor of their public services and the reputation of their genius and talents, Patrick Henry, the first herald of the Revolution in the South, as James Otis had been at the North, and Thomas Jefferson, the author of the Declaration of Independence, and the most intimate and confidential friend of MADISON himself, disapproved the Constitution. Jefferson was indeed at that time absent from the State and the country, as the representative of the United States at the Court of France. His objections to the Constitution were less fervent and radical. Patrick Henry's opposition was to the whole plan, and to its fundamental principle the change from a confederation of Independent States, to a complicated government, partly federal, and partly national. He was a member of the Virginia Convention; and there it was that Mr. MADISON was destined to meet and encounter, and overcome the all but irresistible power of his eloquence, and the inexhaustible resources of his gigantic mind.

The debates in the Virginia Convention furnish an exposition of the principles of the Constitution, and a Commentary upon its provisions not inferior to the papers of the *Federalist*. Patrick Henry pursued his hostility to the system into all its details; objecting not only to the Preamble and the first Article, but

to the Senate, to the President, to the Judicial Power, to the treaty making power, to the control given to Congress over the militia, and especially to the omission of a Bill of Rights—seconded and sustained with great ability by George Mason, who had been a member of the Convention which formed the Constitution, by James Monroe and William Grayson, there was not a controvertible point, real or imaginary, in the whole instrument which escaped their embittered opposition; while upon every point Mr. MADISON was prepared to meet them, with cogent argument, with intense and anxious feeling, and with mild, conciliatory gentleness of temper, disarming the adversary by the very act of seeming to decline contention with him. Mr. MADISON devoted himself particularly to the task of answering and replying to the objections of Patrick Henry, following him step by step, and meeting him at every turn. His principal co adjutors were Governor Randolph, Edmund Pendleton, the President of the Convention, John Marshall, George Nicholas, and Henry Lee of Westmoreland. Never was there assembled in Virginia a body of men, of more surpassing talent, of bolder energy, or of purer integrity than in that Convention. The volume of their debates should be the pocket and the pillow companion of every youthful American aspiring to the honor of rendering important service to his country; and there, as he reads and meditates, will he not fail to perceive the steady, unfaltering mind of JAMES MADISON, marching from victory to victory, over the dazzling but then beclouded genius and eloquence of Patrick Henry.

The result was the unconditional ratification by a majority of only eight votes, of the Constitution of the United States on the part of the Commonwealth of Virginia, together with resolutions, recommending sundry amendments to supply the omission of a Bill of Rights. The example for this had been first set by the Convention of Massachusetts, at the motion of John Hancock, and it was followed by several other of the State Conventions, and gave occasion to the first ten Articles, amendatory of the Constitution prepared by the first Congress of the United States and ratified by the competent number of the State Legislatures, and which supply the place of a Bill of Rights.

In the organization of the Government of the United States, Washington, the leader of the



armies of the revolution, the President of the Convention which had prepared the Constitution for the acceptance of the People—first in War, first in Peace, and first in the hearts of his Countrymen, was by their unanimous voice called to the first Presidency of the United States. For his assistance in the performance of the functions of the Executive power, after the institution by Congress of the chief Departments, he selected Alexander Hamilton for the office of Secretary of the Treasury, and Thomas Jefferson for that of Secretary of State. Mr. MADISON was elected one of the members of the House of Representatives in the first Congress of the United States under the Constitution.

The Treasury itself was to be organized. Public credit, prostrated by the impotence of the Confederation, was to be restored, provision was to be made for the punctual payment of the public debt—taxes were to be levied—the manufactures, commerce and navigation of the Country were to be fostered and encouraged; and a system of conduct towards foreign powers was to be adopted and maintained. A Judiciary system was also to be instituted, accommodated to the new and extraordinary character of the general Government. A permanent seat of Government was to be selected and subjected to the exclusive jurisdiction of Congress; and the definite action of each of the Departments of the Government was to be settled and adjusted. In the councils of President Washington, divisions of opinion between Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Hamilton soon widened into collisions of principle and produced mutual personal estrangement and irritation. In the formation of a general system of policy for the conduct of the Administration in National concerns at home and abroad, different views were taken by Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Hamilton, which Washington labored much, but with little success, to conciliate. Hamilton, charged by successive calls from the House of Representatives, for reports of plans for the restoration of public credit; upon the protection and encouragement of Manufactures, and upon a National Mint and Bank, transmitted upon each of those subjects reports of consummate ability, and proposed plans most of which were adopted by Congress almost without alteration. The Secretary of State during the same period made reports to Congress, not

less celebrated, on the Fisheries, on the system of commercial regulations most proper to be established, and upon weights and measures. Negotiations with foreign powers, which the inefficiency of the confederation had left in a lamentable and languishing condition, humiliating to the national honor and reputation, were resumed and reinstituted, and by long and complicated correspondences with the Governments of Great Britain, Spain and France, the National character was in the first term of the administration of Washington redeemed and exhibited to the world with a splendor never surpassed, and which gave to the tone of our national intercourse with the Sovereigns of the earth a dignity, a firmness, a candor and moderation, which shamed the blustering and trickish diplomacy of Europe at that day and shed a beam of unfading glory upon the name of republican America. But the National Constitution had not only operated as if by enchantment a most auspicious revolution in the character and reputation of the newly independent American People; it had opened new avenues to honor and power and fame, and new prospects to individual ambition.

No sooner was the new Government organized than the eyes, the expectations and the interests and passions of men turned to the designation of the succession to the Presidency, when the official term of Washington should be completed. His own intention was to retire at the expiration of the first four years allotted to the service. The candidates of the North and South, supported by the geographical sympathies of their respective friends, were already giving rise to the agency of political combinations. The Northern candidate was not yet distinctly designated, but before the expiration of the first Congress, Mr. Jefferson was the only intended candidate of the South.

The Protection of Manufactures, the restoration of public credit, the recovery of the securities of the public debt from a state of depreciation little short of total debasement, and the facilities of exchange and of circulation furnished by the establishment of a National Bank, were of far deeper interest to the commercial and Atlantic than to the plantation States. Mr. Jefferson's distrust and jealousy of the powers granted by the Constitution followed him into office, and were perhaps sharpened by the successful exercise of them, under

the auspices of a rival statesman; he insisted upon a rigid construction of all the grants of power—he denied the Constitutional power of Congress to establish Corporations, and especially a National Bank. The question was discussed in the Cabinet Council of Washington, and written opinions of Mr. Jefferson and of Edmund Randolph, then Attorney General, against the Constitutional power of Congress to establish a Bank, were given. With these opinions, Mr. MADISON then concurred. Other questions of justice and expediency, connected with the funding system of Mr. Hamilton, gave rise to warm and acrimonious debates in Congress, and mingling with the sectional divisions of the Union, and with individual attachments to men, gave an impulse and direction to party spirit which has continued to this day, and however modified by changes of times, of circumstances, and of men, can never be wholly extinguished. Too happy should I be, if with a voice speaking from the last to the coming generation of my country, I could effectively urge them to seek, in the temper and moderation of JAMES MADISON, that healing balm which assuages the malignity of the deepest seated political disease, redeems to life the rational mind, and restores to health the incorporated union of our country, even from the brain fever of party spirit.

To the sources of dissensions and the conflicts of opinion transmitted from the confederation, or generated by the organization of the new Government, were soon added the confluent streams of the French revolution and its complication of European Wars. There were features in the French revolution closely resembling our own; there were points of national interest in both countries well adapted to harmonize their relations with each other, and a sentiment of gratitude rooted in the hearts of the American People, by the recent remembrance of the benefits derived from the alliance with France, and community of cause against Britain, engaged all our sympathies in favor of the People of France, subverting their own Monarchy; and when her War, first kindled with Austria and Prussia, spread its flames to Great Britain, the partialities of resentment and hatred, deepening the tide and stimulating the current of more kindly and benevolent affections, became so ardent and impetuous that there was imminent danger of the country's

being immediately involved in the War on the side of France—a danger greatly aggravated by the guaranty to France of her Islands in the West Indies. The subject immediately became a cause of deliberation in the Executive Cabinet, and discordant opinions again disclosed themselves between the Secretary of State, and the Secretary of the Treasury.

On the 18th of April, 1793, President Washington submitted to his Cabinet thirteen questions with regard to the measures to be taken by him in consequence of the revolution which had overthrown the French monarchy; of the new organization of a republic in that country; of the appointment of a minister from that republic to the United States, and of the war, declared by the National Convention of France against Great Britain. The first of these questions was, whether a proclamation should issue to prevent interferences of the citizens of the United States in the War? Whether the proclamation should or should not contain a declaration of neutrality? The second was whether a minister from the republic of France should be received. Upon these two questions the opinion of the Cabinet was unanimous in the affirmative—that a Proclamation of neutrality should issue—and that the minister from the French Republic should be received. But upon all the other questions, the opinions of the four heads of the Departments were equally divided. They were indeed questions of difficulty and delicacy equal to their importance. No less than whether, after a revolution in France annihilating the Government with which the treaties of alliance and of commerce had been contracted, the Treaties themselves were to be considered binding as between the nations; and particularly whether the stipulation of guaranty to France of her possessions in the West Indies, was binding upon the United States to the extent of imposing upon them the obligation of taking side with France in the War. As the members of the Cabinet disagreed in their opinions upon these questions, and as there was no immediate necessity for deciding them, the further consideration of them was postponed, and they were never afterwards resumed. While these discussions of the Cabinet of Washington were held, the Minister Plenipotentiary from the French republic arrived in this country. He had been appointed by the National Convention of France

which had dethroned, and tried, and sentenced to death, and executed Louis the XVIth, abolished the Monarchy, and proclaimed a republic one and indivisible, under the auspices of liberty, equality and fraternity, as thenceforth the Government of France. By all the rest of Europe, they were then considered as revolted subjects in rebellion against their Sovereign; and were not recognized as constituting an independent Government.

General Hamilton and General Knox were of opinion that the Minister from France should be conditionally received, with the reservation of the question, whether the United States were still bound to fulfil the stipulations of the Treaties. They inclined to the opinion that the Treaties themselves were annulled by the revolution of the Government in France—an opinion to which the example of the revolutionary Government had given plausibility by declaring some of the Treaties made by the abolished Monarchy, no longer binding upon the nation. Mr. Hamilton thought also, that France had no just claim to the fulfilment of the stipulation of guaranty, because that stipulation, and the whole Treaty of Alliance in which it was contained were professedly, and on the face of them, only *defensive*, while the War which the French Convention had declared against Great Britain, was on the part of France *offensive*, the first declaration having been issued by her—that the United States were at all events absolved from the obligation of the guaranty by their inability to perform it, and that under the Constitution of the United States the interpretation of Treaties, and the obligations resulting from them, were within the competency of the Executive Department, at least concurrently with the Legislature. It does not appear that these opinions were debated or contested in the Cabinet. By their unanimous advice the Proclamation was issued, and Edmund Charles Genet was received as Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic. Thus the Executive administration did assume and exercise the power of recognising a revolutionary foreign Government as a legitimate Sovereign with whom the ordinary diplomatic relations were to be entertained. But the Proclamation contained no allusion whatever to the Treaties between the United States and France, nor of course to the Article of Guaranty or its obligations.

Whatever doubts may have been entertained by a large portion of the people, of the right of the Executive to acknowledge a new and revolutionary government, not recognized by any other Sovereign State, or of the sound policy of receiving without waiting for the sanction of Congress, a minister from a republic which had commenced her career by putting to death the king whom she had dethroned, and which had rushed into war with almost all the rest of Europe, no manifestation of such doubts was publicly made. A current of popular favor sustained the French Revolution, at that stage of its progress, which nothing could resist, and far from indulging any question of the right of the President to recognise a new revolutionary government, by receiving from it the credentials which none but Sovereigns can grant, the American People would, at that moment, have scarcely endured an instant of hesitation on the part of the President, which should have delayed for an hour the reception of the minister from the Republic of France. But the Proclamation enjoining neutrality upon the people of the United States, indirectly counteracted the torrent of partiality in favor of France, and was immediately assailed with intemperate violence in many of the public journals. The *right* of the Executive to issue any Proclamation of neutrality was fiercely and pertinaciously denied, as a usurpation of Legislative authority, and in that particular case it was charged with forestalling and prematurely deciding the question whether the United States were bound, by the guaranty to France of her West India possessions in the treaty of alliance, to take side in the war with her against Great Britain—and with deciding it against France.

Mr. Jefferson had advised the Proclamation; but he had not considered it as deciding the question of the guaranty. The government of the French Republic had not claimed and never did claim the performance of the guaranty. But so strenuously was the right of the President to issue the Proclamation contested, that Mr. Hamilton, the first adviser of the measure, deemed it necessary to defend it unofficially before the public. This he did in seven successive papers under the signature of *Pacificus*. But in defending the Proclamation, he appears to consider it as necessarily involving the decision against the obligation of the guaranty,



and maintains the right of the Executive so to decide. Mr. MADISON, perhaps in some degree influenced by the opinions and feelings of his long cherished and venerated friend, Jefferson, was already harboring suspicions of a formal design on the part of Hamilton, and of the federal party generally, to convert the government of the United States into a monarchy like that of Great Britain, and thought he perceived in these papers of Pacificus the assertion of a prerogative in the President of the United States to engage the nation in war. He therefore entered the lists against Mr. Hamilton in the public journals, and in five papers under the signature of Helvidius, scrutinized the doctrines of Pacificus with an acuteness of intellect never perhaps surpassed, and with a severity scarcely congenial to his natural disposition, and never on any other occasion indulged. Mr. Hamilton did not reply; nor in any of his papers did he notice the animadversions of Helvidius. But all the Presidents of the United States have from that time exercised the right of yielding and withholding the recognition of governments consequent upon revolutions, though the example of issuing a Proclamation of neutrality has never been repeated. The respective powers of the President and Congress of the United States, in the case of war with foreign powers, are yet undetermined. Perhaps they can never be defined. The Constitution expressly gives to Congress the power of *declaring* war, and that act can of course never be performed by the President alone. But war is often made without being declared. War is a state in which nations are placed not alone by their own acts, but by the acts of other nations. The *declaration* of war is in its nature a legislative act, but the conduct of war is and must be executive. However startled we may be at the idea that the Executive Chief Magistrate has the power of involving the nation in war, even without consulting Congress, an experience of fifty years has proved that in numberless cases he has and must have exercised the power. In the case which gave rise to this controversy, the recognition of the French Republic and the reception of her minister might have been regarded by the allied powers as acts of hostility to them, and they did actually interdict all neutral commerce with France. Defensive war must necessarily be among the duties of the Executive Chief

Magistrate. The papers of Pacificus and Helvidius are among the most ingenious and profound Commentaries on that most important part of the Constitution, the distribution of the Legislative and Executive powers incident to war, and when considered as supplementary to the joint labors of Hamilton and MADISON in the Federalist, they possess a deep and monitory interest to the American philosophical Statesman. The Federalist exhibits the joint efforts of two powerful minds in promoting one great common object, the adoption of the Constitution of the United States. The papers of Pacificus and Helvidius present the same minds, in collision with each other, exerting all their energies in conflict upon the construction of the same instrument which they had so arduously labored to establish; and it is remarkable that upon the points in the papers of Pacificus most keenly contested by his adversary, the most forcible of his arguments are pointed with quotations from the papers of the Federalist, written by Mr. Hamilton.

But whether in conjunction with or in opposition to each other, the co-operation or the encounter of intellects thus exalted and refined, controlled by that moderation and humanity, which have hitherto characterised the history of our Union, cannot but ultimately terminate in spreading light and promoting peace among men. Happy, thrice happy the people, whose political oppositions and conflicts have no ultimate appeal but to their own reason; of whose party feuds the only conquests are of argument, and whose only triumphs are of the mind. In other ages and in other regions than our own, the question of the respective powers of the Legislature and of the Executive with reference to war, might itself have been debated in blood, and sent numberless victims to their account on the battle-field or the scaffold. So it was in the sanguinary annals of the French Revolution. So it has been and yet is in the successive revolutions of our South American neighbors. May that merciful Being who has hitherto overruled all our diversities of opinion, tempered our antagonizing passions, and conciliated our conflicting interests, still preside in all our councils, and in the tempests of our civil commotions still ride in the whirlwind and direct the storm.

It was indeed at one of the most turbulent and tempestuous periods of human history that

the Constitution of the United States first went into operation. It was convulsed not only by the convulsions of the old world, but by tumultuary agitations of the most alarming character and tendency from within. Such were the dangers and the difficulties with which the Government of the United States, from the first moment of its organization under Washington, was beset and surrounded, that they undoubtedly led him to the determination to withdraw from the charge and responsibility of presiding over it, at as early a period as possible. It was with difficulty that he was prevailed upon to postpone the execution of this design till the expiration of a second term of service; but so radically different were the opinions and the systems of policy of Washington's two principal advisers, especially with reference to the external relations of the United States, that he was unable to retain beyond the limits of the first term their united assistance in his Cabinet. In the struggle to maintain the neutrality which he had proclaimed, and in the festering inflammation of interests and passions, gathering with the progress of the French revolution, he coincided more in judgment with the Secretary of the Treasury, than with the Secretary of State, and they successively retired from their offices, in which each of them had rendered the most important services, and contributed to raise the Country and its Government high in the estimation of the world, but unfortunately without being able to harmonise, and finally even to co-operate with each other.

Mr. Jefferson's retirement was first in order; it was voluntary, but under circumstances of dissatisfaction at the prevalence of the Councils of his rival in the Cabinet—and under irritated prepossessions of a deliberate design, in Hamilton, and of all the leading supporters of Washington's administration, to shape the Government of the United States into a monarchy like that of Great Britain. This exasperated feeling, nourished by the political controversy then blazing in all its fury in the war between France and the monarchies of Europe, gradually became the main spring of the opposition to Washington's administration; an opposition which from that time looked to Jefferson as their leader and head. This opposition, fomented by the unprincipled injustice of both the belligerent European powers, and especially by the abandoned profligacy of the directorial

Government of France, continued and increased until in the last year of Washington's administration, a majority if not of the people of the United States, at least of their representatives in Congress, were associated with it. Of that opposition, Mr. Jefferson was the favored candidate for the succession to the Presidency, and by the result of a severely contested election, was placed in the chair of the Senate as Vice President of the United States. This was the effect of a provision in the Constitution, which has since been altered by an amendment. It was one of the new experiments in Government, attempted by the Constitution, and had then been received with an unusual degree of favor, by an anticipated expectation that its operation would be to mitigate and conciliate party spirit, by causing two persons to be voted for, to fill the same office of President, and by consoling the unsuccessful candidate and his friends with the second office in the Government of the Union. The test of experience soon disabused the fallacious foresight of a benevolent theory, and disclosed springs of human action adverse to the device of placing either a political antagonist or coadjutor of the Chief Magistrate at the head of the Senate, and as contingently his successor.

The principles of the administration of Washington were pursued by his immediate successor. The opposition to them was encouraged and fortified by the position of their leader in the second seat of power; and the Directory of France, wallowing in corruption and venality, was preparing the way for their own destruction at home, and setting up to sale the peace of their country with other nations, and especially with the United States. By their violence and fraud they compelled the Congress to annul the existing Treaties between the United States and France, and without an absolute declaration of war, to authorize defensive hostilities.

In the controversy with France during this period, the executive administration was sustained by a vast majority of the People of the Union, and the elections both of the People and of the State Legislatures, returned decided majorities in both houses of Congress of corresponding opinions and policy. A powerful and inveterate opposition to all the *measures* both of Congress and of the administration was however constantly maintained with the coun-



tenance and co-operation of Mr. Jefferson, whose partialities in favor of France and the French revolution, though not extending to the justification of the secret intrigues and open hostilities of the Directory, still counteracted the operations of the American Government to resist and defeat them.

The violence and pertinacity of the opposition provoked the ruling majority in Congress to the adoption of two measures which neither the exasperated spirit of the times, nor the deliberate judgment of after days, could reconcile to the temper of the people. I allude to the two acts of Congress since generally known by the names of the Alien and Sedition Laws. Of their merits or demerits this is not the time or the place to speak. They passed in Congress without vehement opposition, for Mr. Jefferson, then holding the office of Vice President of the United States, took no acting part against them as the presiding officer of the Senate, and Mr. MADISON, at the close of the administration of Washington, had relinquished his seat in the House of Representatives of the Union. Devoted in friendship to the person, and in policy to the views of Mr. Jefferson, he participated with deference in his opinions to an extent which the deliberate convictions of his own judgment sometimes failed to confirm. The alien and sedition acts were intended to suppress the intrigues of foreign emissaries, employed by the profligate Government of the French Directory, and who abused the freedom of the press by traducing the characters of the administration and its friends, and by instigating the resistance of the people against the Government and the laws of the Union.

Among the eminent qualities of Mr. Jefferson, was a keen, constant, and profound faculty of observation with regard to the action and reaction of the popular opinion upon the measures of government. He perceived immediately the operation of the alien and sedition acts, and he availed himself of them with equal sagacity and ardor for the furtherance of his own views of public policy and of personal advancement. In opposition to the alien and sedition acts, he deemed it advisable to bring into action, so far as was practicable, the power of the State Legislatures against the government of the Union. In the pursuit of this system it was his good fortune to obtain the aid and co-operation of Mr. MADISON and of other friends equally

devoted personally to him, and concurring more fully in his sentiments, then members of the Legislature of Kentucky. Assuming as first principles, that by the Constitution of the United States Congress possessed no authority to restrain in any manner the freedom of the press, not even in self-defence against the most incendiary defamation, and that the principles of the English Common Law were of no force under the Government of the United States, he drafted, with his own hand, resolutions which were adopted by the Legislature of Kentucky, declaring that each State had the right to judge for itself as well of infractions of the common Constitution by the general government, as of the mode and measures of redress—that the alien and sedition laws were, in their opinion, manifest and palpable violations of the Constitution, and therefore null and void—and that a *nullification* by the State Sovereignities of all unauthorized acts done under color of the Constitution, is the rightful remedy for such infractions.

The principles thus assumed, and particularly that of remedial nullification by state authority, have been more than once re-asserted by parties predominating in one or more of the confederated States, dissatisfied with particular acts of the general government. They have twice brought the Union itself to the verge of dissolution. To that result it must come, should it ever be the misfortune of the American People that they should obtain the support of a sufficient portion of them to make them effective by force. They never have yet been so supported. The alien and sedition acts were temporary Statutes, and expired by their own limitations. No attempt has been made to revive them, but in our most recent times, restrictions far more rigorous upon the freedom of the press, of speech and of personal liberty, than the alien and sedition laws, have not only been deemed within the constitutional power of Congress, but even recommended by the Chief Magistrate of the Union, to encounter the dangers and evils of incendiary publications.

The influence of Mr. Jefferson over the mind of Mr. MADISON, was composed of all that genius, talent, experience, splendid public services, exalted reputation, added to congenial tempers, undivided friendship and habitual sympathies of interest and of feeling could inspire. Among the numerous blessings which

it was the rare good fortune of Mr. Jefferson's life to enjoy, was that of the uninterrupted, disinterested, and efficient friendship of MADISON. But it was the friendship of a mind not inferior in capacity, and tempered with a calmer sensibility and a cooler judgment than his own. With regard to the measures of Washington's administration, from the time when the Councils of Hamilton acquired the ascendancy over those of Jefferson, the opinions of Mr. MADISON generally coincided with those of his friend. He had resisted, on Constitutional grounds, the establishment of a National Bank—he had proposed, and with all his ability had urged important modifications of the funding system. He had written and published the papers of Helvidius, and he had originated measures of commercial regulation against Great Britain, instead of which Washington had preferred to institute the pacific and friendly mission of Mr. Jay. He had disapproved of the treaty concluded by that eminent, profound and incorruptible statesman, a measure the most rancorously contested of any of those of Washington's administration, and upon which public opinion has remained divided to this day. Mr. MADISON concurred entirely with Mr. Jefferson in the policy of neutrality to the European wars, but with a strong leaning of favor to France and her revolution, which it was then impossible to hold without a leaning approaching to hostility against Great Britain, her policy and her Government. Mr. MADISON therefore, at the earnest solicitation of Mr. Jefferson, introduced into the Legislature of Virginia the resolutions adopted on the 21st of December, 1798, declaring 1. That the Constitution of the United States was a compact, to which the States were parties, granting limited powers of Government. 2. That in case of a deliberate, palpable and dangerous exercise of other powers, not granted by the compact, the States had the right to, and were in duty bound to *interpose*, for arresting the progress of the evils and for maintaining within their respective limits the authorities, rights and liberties appertaining to them. 3. That the alien and sedition acts were palpable and alarming infractions of the Constitution. 4. That the State of Virginia, having by its Convention which ratified the federal Constitution, expressly declared that among other essential rights the liberty of conscience and

the press cannot be cancelled, abridged, restrained, or modified by any authority of the United States, and from its extreme anxiety to guard these rights from every possible attack of sophistry and ambition, having with the other States recommended an amendment for that purpose, which amendment was in due time annexed to the Constitution, it would mark a reproachful inconsistency and criminal degeneracy if an indifference were now shown to the most palpable violation of one of the rights thus declared and secured, and to the establishment of a precedent which might be fatal to the other. 5. That the State of Virginia declared the alien and sedition laws UNCONSTITUTIONAL—solemnly appealed to the like dispositions in the other States, in confidence that they would concur with her in that declaration, and that the necessary and proper measures would be taken by each, for *co-operating* with her, in maintaining unimpaired the authorities, rights and liberties reserved to the States respectively, or to the People. 6. That the Governor should be desired to transmit a copy of these resolutions to the Executive authority of each of the other States, with a request that they should be communicated to the respective State Legislatures, and that a copy should be furnished to each of the Senators and Representatives of Virginia in Congress.

The resolutions did but in part carry into effect the principles and purposes of Mr. Jefferson. His original intention was that the alien and sedition acts should be declared by the State Legislatures, null and void—and that with the declaration that *nullification* by them was the rightful remedy for such usurpations of power by the federal Government, committees of correspondence and co-operation should be appointed by the Legislatures of the States concurring in the resolutions, for consultation with regard to further measures. Before the adoption of the Virginia resolutions, the Legislature of Kentucky had adopted others drafted by Mr. Jefferson himself and introduced by two of his friends in that body. In those resolutions, the doctrines of nullification by the State Legislatures of acts of Congress, deemed by them unconstitutional, was first explicitly and unequivocally asserted. But even in Kentucky the Legislature was not quite prepared for consultation upon further measures of co-operation by committees of correspondence.

The Virginia Resolutions were transmitted to the other States, with an address to the people in support of them, written by Mr. MADISON. They were strongly disapproved by resolutions of all the Legislatures of the New England States, and by those of New York and Delaware. They were not, nor were those of the Legislature of Kentucky concurred in by any other State Legislature of the Union, but they contributed greatly to increase the unpopularity of the measures which they denounced, and sharpened the edge of every weapon wielded against the administration of the time.

At the succeeding sessions of the Legislatures of Kentucky and of Virginia, they took into consideration the answers of the Legislatures of the other States to their resolutions of 1798. The reply of Kentucky was in the form of a resolution re-asserting the right of the separate States to judge of infractions, by the Government of the Union, of the Constitution of the United States, and expressly affirming that a *nullification* by the State Sovereignities of all unauthorized acts done under color of that instrument, was the rightful remedy; and complaining of the doctrines and principles attempted to be maintained in *all* the answers, that of Virginia only excepted.

In the Legislature of Virginia, a long, most able and elaborate report was written by Mr. MADISON, in reply to the answers received from the other States, and concluded with the following resolution:

"That the General Assembly, having carefully and respectfully attended to the proceedings of a number of the States, in answer to the resolutions of December 21, 1798, and having accurately and fully re-examined and reconsidered the latter, find it to be their indispensable duty to *adhere to the same*, as founded in truth, as consonant with the Constitution, and as conducive to its preservation; and more especially to be their duty to renew as they do hereby renew their protest against the alien and sedition acts, as palpable and alarming infractions of the Constitution."

The report and resolution were adopted by the Legislature in February, 1800. The alien law expired by its own limitation, on the 25th of June of that year, and the sedition act on the 4th of March, 1801.

The proceedings of the Legislatures of Ken-

tucky and Virginia relating to the alien and sedition acts, gave to them an importance far beyond that which naturally belonged to them. The acts themselves, and the resolutions of the Legislatures concerning them, may now be considered merely as adversary *party* measures.

The agency of Mr. Jefferson in originating the measures of both the State Legislatures was at the time profoundly secret. It has been made known only since his decease, but in estimating the weight of the objections against the two laws on sound principles as well of morals as of politics, the fact as well as the manner of that agency are observable. The situation which he then held, and that to which he ascended by its operation, are considerations not to be overlooked in fixing the deliberate judgment of posterity upon the whole transaction. Mr. MADISON'S motives for the part which he acted in the drama, are not liable to the same scrutiny; nor did his public station at the time, nor the principles which he asserted in the management of the controversy, nor the measures which he proposed, recommended and accomplished, subject his posthumous reputation and character to the same animadversions. Standing here as the sincere and faithful organ of the sentiments of my fellow citizens to honor a great and illustrious benefactor of his country, it would be as foreign from the honest and deliberate judgment of my soul as from the sense of my duties on this occasion to profess my assent to the reasoning of his report, or my acquiescence in the application of its unquestionable principles to the two acts of Congressional legislation which it arraigns. That because the *States* of this Union, as well as their people, are parties to the Constitutional compact of the federal Government, therefore the STATE LEGISLATURES have the right to judge of infractions of the Constitution by the organized Government of the whole, and to declare acts of Congress unconstitutional, is as abhorrent to the conclusions of my judgment as to the feelings of my heart—but holding the converse of those propositions with a conviction as firm as an article of religious faith, I too clearly see to admit of denial, that minds of the highest order of intellect, and hearts of the purest integrity of purpose, have been brought to different conclusions. If Jefferson and MADISON deemed the alien and sedition acts plain and



palpable infractions of the Constitution, Washington and Patrick Henry held them to be good and wholesome laws. These opinions were perhaps all formed under excitements and prepossessions which detract from the weight of the highest authority. The alien act was passed under feelings of honest indignation at the audacity with which foreign emissaries were practising within the bosom of the country upon the passions of the people against their own Government. The sedition act was intended as a curb upon the publication of malicious and incendiary slander upon the President or the two Houses of Congress, or either of them. But they were restrictive upon the personal liberty of foreign emissaries, and upon the political licentiousness of the press. The alien act produced its effect by its mere enactment, in the departure from the country of the most obnoxious foreigners, and the power conferred by it upon the President was never exercised. The prosecutions under the sedition act did but aggravate the evil which they were intended to repress. Without believing that either of those laws was an infraction of the Constitution, it may be admitted without disparagement to the authority of Washington and Henry, or of the Congress which passed the acts, that they were not good and wholesome laws, inasmuch as they were not suited to the temper of the people.

Emergencies may arise in which the authority of Congress will be invoked by the portion of the people most aggrieved by the alien and sedition acts, for arbitrary expulsion of foreign incendiaries, and for the suppression of incendiary publications at home, by measures far more rigorous and more palpably violative of the Constitution than those laws, and if the temper of that portion of the people which approved *them*, shall be, as it has recently been, and perhaps still is, attuned to endure the experiment, the Constitutional authority of Congress will be found amply sufficient for the enactment of statutes far more sharp and biting than they were. The question with regard to the constitutionality of those laws is however far different from that of the manner in which they were resisted. In that originated the doctrine of *nullification*.

In this respect there appears to have been a very material difference between the opinions and purposes of Mr. Jefferson and Mr. MADISON.

Concurring in the doctrine that the separate States have the right to *interpose*, in case of palpable infractions of the Constitution by the Government of the United States, and that the alien and sedition acts presented a case of such infraction, Mr. Jefferson considered them as absolutely null and void, and thought the State Legislatures competent not only to declare, but to *make* them so; to resist their execution within their respective borders by physical force; and to secede and separate from the Union, rather than submit to them, if attempted to be carried into execution by force. To these doctrines Mr. MADISON did not subscribe. He disclaimed them in the most explicit manner, at a very late period of his life, and in his last and most matured sentiments with regard to those laws, he considered them rather as unadvised acts, passed in contravention to the opinions and feelings of the community, than as more unconstitutional than many other acts of Congress which have generally accorded with the views of a majority of the States and of the people.

Upon the change of the administration by the election of Mr. Jefferson as President of the United States in 1801, a new career was opened to the talents and wisdom of his friend, who thenceforth became his first assistant and his most confidential adviser in the administration of the Government.

That administration was destined to pass through ordeals scarcely less severe than those which had tested the efficiency of the Constitution of the United States under the Presidency of his predecessors.

By a singular concurrence of good fortune, Mr. Jefferson was immediately after his accession relieved from the pressure of all the important difficulties and menacing dangers which had so heavily weighed upon the administration of both his predecessors. The differences between them both and the United States, which had during the twelve years of those administrations kept the nation without intermission in the most imminent dangers of war, first with Great Britain, and afterwards with France, had all been adjusted by Treaties with both those nations. The revolutionary violence of Republican France had already subsided into a military Government. Still retaining the name of a republic, but rapidly ripening into a hereditary monarchy. The wars



in Europe themselves were about to cease, for a short period indeed, and soon to blaze out with renewed and aggravated fury, but upon questions of mere conquest and aggrandizement between the belligerent powers. In the same year with the inauguration of Mr. Jefferson, the peace of Amiens had replaced France at the head of continental Europe, leaving Great Britain in the uncontested, if not undisputed dominion of the sea.

The expenditures for the army and navy, already much reduced by the reduction of the former to a small peace establishment, admitted of further retrenchments, and the very questionable policy of reducing also the latter, allowed a corresponding reduction of taxation, which gave the new administration the popular attraction of professed retrenchment and reform. For the naval armaments which the sharp collisions with both the belligerent nations had rendered necessary, although they had nobly sustained the glory of valor and skill upon the ocean acquired during the revolutionary war, and were destined to deeds of yet more exalted fame in the administration of his successor, had necessarily occasioned heavy expense—had been among the measures most severely censured by Mr. Jefferson, and were among his most favorite objects of reform. Reformed they accordingly were, and dry-docks and gun-boats became for a time the cheap defences of the nation. The gallant spirit of the navy was itself discountenanced and discouraged, till a Tripolitan Cruiser, captured after a desperate battle, was not even taken into possession, upon a scruple of the victor's instructions whether self-defence could give a right to the fruits of victory, without a declaration of war by Congress.

The reduction of the navy, while it lasted, deeply injurious both to the honor and the interests of the nation, gave however to the incipient administration the credit of reduced expenditures, retrenchment and reform: such was its first effect at home. Abroad its first fruit was the contempt of the Barbary powers—insult, outrage and war—a new armament, and new taxation under the denomination of a Mediterranean fund, took the place of retrenchment; and when the smothered flames of war burst forth anew between France and Britain, the impressment of our seamen, Orders in Council, Paper Blockades, Decrees of Berlin,

of Milan, of Rambouillet, and finally the murder of our mariners within our own waters, and the wanton and savage attack upon the frigate Chesapeake, proved in the degradation of our national reputation, and in the cowering of that undaunted spirit which rides upon the mountain wave, the short-sightedness of that policy, which trusted to gun-boats and dry-docks for the defence of the country upon the world of waters, and which had crippled the naval arm, and tamed the gallant spirit of the Union, for the glory of retrenchment and reform.

On the other hand, the renewal of the European war, and the partialities of Mr. Jefferson in favor of France, enabled him to accomplish an object which greatly enlarged the territories of the Union—which removed a most formidable source of future dissensions with France—which exceedingly strengthened the relative influence and power of the State and section of the Union, to which he himself belonged, and which in its consequences changed the character of the Confederacy itself. This operation, by far the greatest that has been accomplished by any administration under the Constitution, was consummated at the price of fifteen millions of dollars in money, and of a direct, unqualified, admitted violation of the Constitution of the United States. According to the theory of Mr. Jefferson, as applied by him to the alien and sedition acts, it was absolutely null and void. It might have been nullified by the Legislature of any one State in the Union, and if persisted in, would have warranted and justified a combination of States, and their secession from the confederacy in resistance against it.

That an amendment to the Constitution was necessary to legalize the annexation of Louisiana to the Union, was the opinion both of Mr. Jefferson and of Mr. MADISON. They finally acquiesced however in the latitudinous construction of that instrument, which holds the treaty-making powers, together with an act of Congress, sufficient for this operation. It was accordingly thus consummated by Mr. Jefferson, and has been sanctioned by the acquiescence of the people. Upwards of thirty years have passed away since this great change was effected. By a subsequent Treaty with Spain, by virtue of the same powers and authority, the Floridas have been annexed also to

the Union, and the boundaries of the United States have been extended from the Mississippi to the Pacific ocean. There is now nothing in the Constitution of the United States to inhibit their extension to the two polar circles from the Straits of Hudson to the Straits of Magellan. Whether this very capacity of enlargement of Territory and multiplication of States by the constructive power of Congress, without check or control either by the States or by their people, will not finally terminate in the dissolution of the Union itself, time alone can determine. The credit of the acquisition of Louisiana, whether to be considered as a source of good or of evil, is perhaps due to Robert R. Livingston more than to any other man, but the merit of its accomplishment must ever remain as the great and imperishable memorial of the administration of Jefferson.

In the interval between the Peace of Amiens, and the renewal of the wars of France with the rest of Europe, the grasping spirit and gigantic genius of Napoleon had been revolving projects of personal aggrandizement and of national ambition of which this western hemisphere was to be the scene. He had extorted from the languishing and nerveless dynasty of the Bourbons in Spain the retrocession of the Province of Louisiana, with a description of boundary sufficiently indefinite, to raise questions of limits whenever it might suit his purpose to settle them by the intimation of his will. Here it had been his purpose to establish a military Colony, with the Mexican dominions of Spain on one side, and the United States of America and the continental colonies of Great Britain on the other, in the centre of the western hemisphere, the stand for a lever to wield at his pleasure the destinies of the world. This plan was discomposed by a petty squabble with Great Britain about the Island of Malta; and a project wilder if possible than his military Colony of Louisiana—namely the Cæsarion operation of conquering the British Islands themselves by direct invasion. The transfer of Louisiana had been stipulated by a secret treaty, but possession had not been taken. Mr. Livingston was then the Minister of the United States in France. He had been made acquainted with the existence of the Treaty of retrocession of Louisiana, and by a memorial of great ability, had expostulated against it, urging as scarcely less essential to the interests of

France than of the United States, that the Province should be ceded to them. This memorial when presented had met with little attention from Napoleon. His military Colony of twenty thousand men was on the point of embarkation, under the command of one of his Lieutenants, destined himself in after time to wear the crown of Gustavus-Adolphus, when the Iron Crown of Lombardy and the imperial crown of France, after encircling the brows of Napoleon, should have melted before the leaden sceptre of the restored Bourbons. Napoleon was to rise to the summit of human greatness, and to fall from it over another precipice, than that to which he was approaching with his military colony of Louisiana. When he determined to renew the war with England, still mistress of the seas, he could no longer risk the fortunes of his soldiers in a passage across the Atlantic, and unable as he was to cope with the thunders of Britain upon the ocean, he saw that Louisiana itself, if he should take possession of the Province, must inevitably fall an easy prey to the enemy with whom he was to contend. He therefore abandoned his project of conquests in America, and determined at once to sell his Colony of Louisiana to the United States.

Never in the fortunes of mankind was there a more sudden, complete and propitious turn in the tide of events than this change in the purposes of Napoleon proved to the administration of Mr. Jefferson. The wrangling altercation with Spain for the navigation of the Mississippi, had been adjusted during the administration of Washington, by a treaty, which had conceded to them the right, and stipulated to make its enjoyment effective, of deposit at New Orleans. In repurchasing from Spain the Colony of Louisiana, Napoleon, to disincumber himself from the burden of this stipulation, and to hold in his hand a rod over the western section of this Union, had compelled the dastardly and imbecile monarch of Spain to commit an act of perfidy, by withdrawing from the people of the United States this stipulated right of deposit before delivering the possession of the Colony to France. The great artery of the commerce of the Union was thus choaked in its circulation. The sentiment of surprise, of alarm, of indignation, was instantaneous and universal among the people. The hardy and enterprising settlers of the western country could hardly

be restrained from pouring down the swelling floods of their population, to take possession of New Orleans itself, by the immediate exercise of the rights of war. A war with Spain must have been immediately followed by a war with France, which, however just the cause of the United States would have been, must necessarily give a direction to public affairs adverse to the whole system of Mr. Jefferson's policy, and in all probability prove fatal to the success of his administration. Instigations to immediate war, were at once attempted in Congress, and were strongly countenanced by the excited temper of the people. Mr. Jefferson instituted an extraordinary mission both to France and Spain, to remonstrate against the withdrawal of the right of deposit, and to propose anew the purchase of the Island of New Orleans. By one of those coincidences in the course of human events, too rare to be numbered among the ordinary dispensations of Providence; too common to be accountable upon the doctrine of unregulated chance, when Mr. Jefferson's minister arrived at the seat of his first destination, his charge, and much more than his charge, was already performed. Napoleon had resolved to sell to the United States the whole of Louisiana, and Great Britain, under the influence of fears and jealousies of him, even deeper than those with which she pined at every prosperity of her alienated child, had declared her acquiescence in the transfer. The American negotiators without hesitation transcended their powers, to obtain all Louisiana instead of Florida. Claims of indemnity to the citizens of the United States, for wrongs suffered from the preceding revolutionary Governments of France, were provided for by a separate Convention, and paid for with part of the purchase money for the Province, and the whole remnant of the fifteen millions was, in the midst of a raging war, with the knowledge and assent of the British Government, furnished by English Bankers to be expended in preparations for the conquest of England by invasion.

It will be no detraction from the merits or services of Mr. Jefferson, or of his Secretary of State, to acknowledge that in all this transaction Fortune claims to herself the lion's share. To seize and turn to profit the precise instant of the turning tide, is itself among the eminent properties of a Statesman, and if requiring less elevated virtue than the firmness and pru-

dence that withstand adversity, or the moderation which adorns and dignifies prosperity, it is not less essential to the character of an accomplished ruler of men.

But Napoleon had transferred the acquisition which he had wrenched from the nerveless hand of Spain with its indefinite and equivocal boundary. He had also violated his faith, pledged to Spain when he took back the Province, once the Colony of France, that he would never cede it to the United States. Spain immediately complained, remonstrated, protested against the cession, the just reward of her own perfidy, in withdrawing the stipulated right of deposit at New Orleans; and although Napoleon soon silenced her complaints, and constrained her to withdraw her protest against the cession, yet on the question of boundary, he had contracted his province of Louisiana almost within the dimensions of the Island of New Orleans. Negotiations with Spain and France, soon complicated with the sharper collisions of neutral and belligerent rights, and with the war of extermination between France and Britain, called for all the talents and all the energies of the President, and of his friend and Minister in the Department of State. The discussions respecting the boundaries of Louisiana were soon brought to a close. Spain contested the claims of the United States, both east and west of the Mississippi. The United States, after an ineffectual attempt to obtain the Floridas from Spain, agreed to leave both the questions of boundary to the decision of France, and Napoleon instantly decided it on both sides of the Mississippi against them.

In the first wars of the French revolution Great Britain had begun by straining the claim of belligerent, as against neutral rights, beyond all the theories of international jurisprudence, and even beyond her own ordinary practice. There is in all war a conflict between the belligerent and the neutral right, which can in its nature be settled only by convention. And in addition to all the ordinary asperities of dissension between the nation at war and the nation at peace, she had asserted a right of man-stealing from the vessels of the United States. The claim of right was to take by force all sea-faring men, her own subjects, wherever they were found by her naval officers, to serve their king in his wars. And under color of this tyrant's right, her naval officers, down to the



most beardless Midshipman, actually took from the American merchant vessels which they visited, any seaman whom they chose to take for a British subject. After the Treaty of November, 1794, she had relaxed all her pretensions against the neutral rights, and had gradually abandoned the practice of impressment till she was on the point of renouncing it by a formal Treaty stipulation. At the renewal of the war, after the Peace of Amiens, it was at first urged with much respect for the rights of neutrality, but the practice of impressment was soon renewed with aggravated severity, and the commerce of neutral nations with the Colonies of the adverse belligerent was wholly interdicted on the pretence of justification, because it had been forbidden by the enemy herself in time of peace. This pretension had been first raised by Great Britain in the seven years' war, but she had been overawed by the armed neutrality from maintaining it in the war of the American revolution. In the midst of this war with Napoleon, she suddenly reasserted the principle, and by a secret order in Council, swept the ocean of nearly the whole mass of neutral commerce. Her war with France spread itself all over Europe, successively involving Spain, Italy, the Netherlands, Prussia, Austria, Russia, Denmark and Sweden. Not a single neutral power remained in Europe—and Great Britain, after annihilating at Trafalgar the united naval power of France and Spain, ruling thenceforth with undisputed dominion upon the ocean, conceived the project of engrossing even the commerce with her enemy by intercepting all neutral navigation. These measures were met by corresponding acts of violence, and sophistical principles of National Law, promulgated by Napoleon, rising to the summit of his greatness, and preparing his downfall by the abuse of his elevation. Through this fiery ordeal the administration of Mr. Jefferson was to pass, and the severest of its tests were to be applied to Mr. MADISON. His correspondence with the ministers of Great Britain, France and Spain, and with the ministers of the United States to those nations during the remainder of Mr. Jefferson's administration, constitute the most important and most valuable materials of its history. His examination of the British doctrines relating to neutral trade, will hereafter be considered a standard Treatise on the Law of Nations; not inferior to

the works of any writer upon those subjects since the days of Grotius, and every way worthy of the author of Publius and of Helvidius. There is indeed, in all the diplomatic papers of American Statesmen, justly celebrated as they have been, nothing superior to this Dissertation, which was not strictly official. It was composed amidst the duties of the Department of State, never more arduous than at that time—in the summer of 1806. It was published inofficially, and a copy of it was laid on the table of each member of Congress at the commencement of the session in December, 1806.

The controversies of conflicting neutral and belligerent rights, continued through the whole of Mr. Jefferson's administration, during the latter part of which they were verging rapidly to war. He had carried the policy of peace perhaps to an extreme. His system of defence by commercial restrictions, dry-docks, gun-boats and embargoes, was stretched to its last hair's breadth of endurance. Far be it from me, my fellow citizens, to speak of this system or of its motives with disrespect. If there be a duty, binding in chains more adamant than all the rest the conscience of a Chief Magistrate of this Union, it is that of preserving peace with all mankind—peace with the other nations of the earth—peace among the several States of this Union—peace in the hearts and temper of our own people. Yet must a President of the United States never cease to feel that his charge is to maintain the rights, the interests and the honor no less than the peace of his country—nor will he be permitted to forget that peace must be the offspring of two concurring wills. That to seek peace is not always to ensure it. He must remember too, that a reliance upon the operation of measures, from their effect on the *interests*, however clear and unequivocal of nations, cannot be safe against a counter current of their passions. That nations, like individuals, sacrifice their peace to their pride, to their hatred, to their envy, to their jealousy, and even to the craft, which the cunning of hackneyed politicians not unfrequently mistakes for policy. That nations, like individuals, have sometimes the misfortune of losing their senses, and that lunatic communities, which cannot be confined in hospitals, must be resisted in arms, as a single maniac is sometimes restored to reason by the scourge. That national madness is infectious, and that a



paroxysm of it in one people, especially when generated by the Furies that preside over war, produces a counter paroxysm in their adverse party. Such is the melancholy condition as yet of associated man. And while in the wise but mysterious dispensations of an overruling Providence, man shall so continue, the peace of every nation must depend not alone upon its own will, but upon that concurrently with the will of all others.

And such was the condition of the two mightiest nations of the earth during the administration of Mr. Jefferson. Frantic, in fits of mutual hatred, envy and jealousy against each other; meditating mutual invasion and conquest, and forcing the other nations of the four quarters of the globe to the alternative of joining them as allies or encountering them as foes. Mr. Jefferson met them with moral philosophy and commercial restrictions, with dry-docks and gun-boats—with non-intercourses, and embargoes, till the American nation were told that they could not be kicked into a war, and till they were taunted by a British Statesman in the Imperial Parliament of England, with their five fir frigates and their striped bunting.

Mr. Jefferson pursued his policy of peace till it brought the nation to the borders of internal war. An embargo of fourteen months duration was at last reluctantly abandoned by him, when it had ceased to be obeyed by the people, and State Courts were ready to pronounce it unconstitutional. A non-intercourse was then substituted in its place, and the helm of State passed from the hands of Mr. Jefferson to those of Mr. MADISON, precisely at the moment of this perturbation of earth and sea, threatened with war from abroad and at home, but with the principle definitively settled that in our intercourse with foreign nations, reason, justice and commercial restrictions require live oak hearts and iron or brazen mouths to speak, that they may be distinctly heard, or attentively listened to, by the distant ear of foreigners, whether French or British, monarchical or republican.

The administration of Mr. MADISON was with regard to its most essential principles, a continuation of that of Mr. Jefferson. He too was the friend of peace, and earnestly desirous of maintaining it. As a last resource for the preservation of it, an act of Congress prohibited

all commercial intercourse with both belligerents, the prohibition to be withdrawn from either or both in the event of a repeal by either of the orders and decrees in violation of neutral rights. France ungraciously and equivocally withdrew her's. Britain refused, hesitated, and at last conditionally withdrew her's when it was too late—after a formal declaration of war had been issued by Congress at the recommendation of President MADISON himself.

Of the necessity, the policy or even the justice of this war, there are conflicting opinions, not yet, perhaps never to be, harmonized. This is not the time or the place to discuss them. The passions, the prejudices and the partialities of that day have passed away. That it was emphatically a popular war, having reference to the whole people of the United States, will, I think, not be denied. That it was in a high degree unpopular in our own section of the Union, is no doubt equally true; and that it was so, constituted the greatest difficulties and prepared the most mortifying disasters in its prosecution.

The war itself was an ordeal through which the Constitution of the United States, as the Government of a great nation, was to pass. Its trial in that respect was short but severe. In the intention of its founders, and particularly of Mr. MADISON, it was a Constitution essentially pacific in its character, and for a nation above all others, the lover of peace—yet its great and most vigorous energies, and all its most formidable powers, are reserved for the state of war—and war is the condition in which the functions allotted to the separate States sink into impotence compared with those of the general Government.

The war was brought to a close without any definitive adjustment of the controverted principles in which it had originated. It left the questions of neutral commerce with an enemy and his colonies, of bottom and cargo, of blockade and contraband of war, and even of impressment, precisely as they had been before the war. With the European war all the conflicts between belligerent and neutral rights had ceased. Great Britain, triumphant as she was after a struggle of more than twenty years' duration—against revolutionary, republican and imperial France, was in no temper to yield the principles for which in the heat of her contest she had defied the power of neutrality and the voice of justice. As little

were the Government or people of the United States disposed to yield principles, upon which, if there had been any error in their previous intercourse with the belligerent powers, it was that of faltering for the preservation of peace, in the defence of the rights of neutrality, and of conceding too much to the lawless pretensions of naval war.

The extreme solicitude of the American Government for the perpetuity of peace, especially with Great Britain, induced Mr. MADISON to institute with her negotiations after the peace of Ghent, for the adjustment of all these questions of maritime collisions between the warlike and the pacific nation. The claims of neutral right are all founded upon the precepts of Christianity and the natural rights of man. The warring party's claim is founded upon the immemorial usages of war, untempered and unmitigated by the chastening spirit of Christianity. They all rest upon the right of force—or upon what has been termed the ultimate argument of kings. But since the whole Island of Albion has been united under one Government, her foreign wars have necessarily all been upon or beyond the seas. Her consolidation and her freedom have made her the first of Maritime States, and the first of humane, learned, intelligent, but warlike nations of modern days. At home, she is generous, beneficent, tender-hearted, and above all proud of her liberty and loyalty united as in one. Free as the air upon her mountains, she tyrannizes over one class of her people, and that the very class upon which she depends for the support of her freedom. She proclaims that the foot, be it of a slave, by alighting on her soil, emancipates the man; and as if it were the exclusive right of her soil, the foot of her own mariner, by passing from it upon the deck of a ship, slips into the fetters of a slave. There is no writ of Habeas Corpus for a British sailor. The stimulant to his love of his king and country is the Press Gang.

This glaring inconsistency with the first principles of the British Constitution, is justified on the plea of necessity, which being above all law, claims equal exemption from responsibility to the tribunal of reason. The efforts of Mr. MADISON and of his successors to obtain an amicable adjustment of this great source of hostility between the kindred nations have hitherto proved equally unavailing. One short

interval has occurred since the peace, during which a war broke out between France and Spain, to which Britain was neutral, and the views of her ruling Statesmen were then favorable to the rights of neutrality. Had that war been of longer continuance, the prospects of a mitigation of the customs of maritime warfare might have been more propitious; but we can now only indulge the hope that the glory of extinguishing the flame of war by land and sea is reserved for the future destinies of our confederated land.

The peace with Great Britain was succeeded by a short war with Algiers, in which the first example was set of a peace with that piratical power purchased by chastisement substituted for tribute—and which set the last seal to the policy of maintaining the rights and interests of the United States by a permanent naval force.

The revolutions in Spain, and in her Colonies of this hemisphere, complicated with questions of disputed boundaries, and with claims of indemnity for depredations upon our commerce, formed subjects for important negotiations during the war with Great Britain, and after its close. Never, since the institution of civil society, have there been within so short a time so many assumptions of sovereign powers. The crown of Spain was abdicated by Charles the Fourth, and then by his son Ferdinand, while a prisoner to Napoleon, at Bayonne, transferred to the house of Buonaparte, as the kingdom of Naples had been by conquest before. In Germany, the dissolution of the German empire had generated a kingdom of Westphalia, and converted into kingdoms the electorates of Saxony, of Bavaria, of Wirtemberg and of Hanover. The kingdom of Portugal had been overshadowed by an empire of Brazil, and every petty province of Spain in this hemisphere, down to the Floridas and Amelia Island, constituted themselves into sovereign States, unfurled their flags and claimed their seats among the potentates of the earth. Under these circumstances, it became often a question of great delicacy, who should be recognized as such, and with whom an exchange of diplomatic functionaries should be made. There was, during Mr. MADISON's administration, a period during which war was waged in Spain for the restoration of a Prince who had himself renounced his throne. A regency acting in

his name was recognized by Great Britain, under whose auspices he was finally restored. Napoleon had given the crown of Spain, wrested by fraud and violence from the Bourbons, to his brother, who was recognized as king of Spain by all the continental powers of Europe, and it was in the conflict between these two usurpers, that the transatlantic Colonies of Spain in this hemisphere, disclaiming allegiance to either of the contending parties, asserted their own rights as independent communities. Mr. MADISON believed it to be the duty and the policy of the United States, while the *fact* remained to be decided by the issue of war, to withhold the acknowledgment of sovereign power alike from them all. The reception of a minister appointed by the regency of Spain, was therefore delayed, until he was commissioned by Ferdinand himself after his restoration, and the total expulsion of his rival, Joseph Buonaparte. But most of the American Colonies of Spain, released from their bonds of subjection to a European king, by the first dethronement and abdication of Charles the Fourth, refused ever after all submission to the monarchs of Spain, and those on the American Continents which submitted for a time shortly after, declared and have maintained their Independence, yet however unacknowledged by Spain. No general union of the several Colonies of Spain, analogous to that of the British Colonies in these United States, has been or is ever likely to be established. The several Vice Royalities have in their dissolution, melted into masses of confederated or consolidated Governments. They have been ravaged by incessant internal dissensions and civil war. As they attempt to unite in one, or as they separate into parts, new States present themselves, claiming the prerogatives of sovereignty, and the powers of Independent nations. The European kingdoms of France, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Greece, have been in the same convulsionary State, with contending claims of sovereign power, so that the question of *recognition*, in almost numberless cases, and under a multitude of forms, has been before the Government of the United States for decision.

The act of recognition, being an execution of the laws of nations, is an attribute of executive power, and has therefore been invariably performed under the present Constitution of the

United States by their President. Mr. MADISON withheld this recognition from the minister of the Spanish Regency, but yielded it to the same person, when commissioned by Ferdinand. He left to his successors the obligation of withholding and of conceding the acknowledgment, as the duties of this nation might from time to time forbid or enjoin; and a question of the deepest interest, under circumstances pregnant with unparalleled consequences, is while I speak under the consideration, and subject to the decision of the President of the United States.

The severest trials of our country induced by the war with Great Britain were endured by the disorder of the national finances. The revenues of the Union until then had consisted almost exclusively in the proceeds of taxation by impost on imported merchandize. Excises, land taxes, and taxes upon stamps were resorted to during the war, but were always found more burdensome and less acceptable to the people. It is, however, a disadvantage, perhaps counterbalanced by consequences more permanently beneficial in our political system, that the revenue from impost, more easily collected and more productive than any other in time of peace, must necessarily fail, almost entirely, in war with a nation of superior maritime force. Our admirable system of settlement and disposal of the public lands had been long established, but was at that time and for many years since little known by its fruits. It is doubtful whether until the last year the proceeds of the sales have been sufficient to defray the cost of the purchase, and the expenses of management. The prices at which they are sold have been reduced, while the wages of labor have risen, till the purchaser for settlement receives them upon terms nearly gratuitous. They are now an inestimable source of a copious revenue, and if honestly and carefully managed for the people to whom they belong, may hereafter alleviate the burden of taxation in all its forms. But when the war with Great Britain was declared in 1812, the population of this Union was less than one half its numbers at the present day. It increases now at the average rate of half a million of souls every year. For this state of unexampled prosperity a tribute of gratitude and applause is due to the administration of MADISON, for the wise and conciliatory policy upon which it was conducted from the close of the war, until the end of his second Presiden-



tial term, in March 1817, when he voluntarily retired from public life.

From that day, for a period advancing upon its twentieth year, he lived in a happy retirement; in the bosom of a family, and with a partner for life alike adapted to the repose and comfort of domestic privacy, as she had been to adorn and dignify the highest of public stations. Between the occupations of agriculture, the amusements of literature, and the exercise of beneficence, the cultivation of the soil, of the mind and of the heart, the leisure of his latter days was divided. In 1829, a Convention was held in Virginia for the revisal of the Constitution of the Commonwealth, in which transaction the people of the State again enjoyed the benefit of his long experience and his calm and conciliatory counsels. The unanimous sense of that body would have deferred to him the honor of presiding over their deliberations, but the infirmities of age had already so far encroached upon the vigor of his constitution, that he declined in the most delicate manner the nomination, by proposing himself the election of his friend and successor to the Chief Magistracy of the Union, James Monroe. He was accordingly chosen without any other nomination, but was afterwards himself so severely indisposed, that he was compelled to resign both the Presidency and his seat in the Convention before they had concluded their labors.

On one occasion of deep interest to the people of the State, on the question of the ratio of representation in the two branches of the Legislature, Mr. MADISON took an active part, and made a speech the substance of which has been preserved.

"Such in those moments as in all the past."

This speech is so perfectly characteristic of the man, that it might itself be considered as an epitome of his life. Though delivered upon a question, which in a discussion upon a Constitution of this Commonwealth could not even be raised, it was upon a subject which probed to the deepest foundations the institution of civil society. It was upon the condition of the colored population of the Commonwealth, and upon their relations as persons and as property to the State. Every part of the speech is full of the spirit which animated him through life. Nor can I resist the temptation to repeat a few

short passages from it, which may serve as samples of the whole.

"It is sufficiently obvious, said Mr. MADISON, that persons and property are the two great objects on which Governments are to act; that the rights of persons and the rights of property are the objects for the protection of which Government was instituted. These rights cannot well be separated. The personal right to acquire property, which is a natural right, gives to property when acquired, a right to protection, as a social right."

"It is due to justice; due to humanity; due to truth; to the sympathies of our nature in fine, to our character as a people, both abroad and at home; that the colored part of our population should be considered, as much as possible, in the light of human beings, and not as mere property. As such, they are acted upon by our laws, and have an interest in our laws."

"In framing a Constitution, great difficulties are necessarily to be overcome; and nothing can ever overcome them but a spirit of compromise. Other nations are surprised at nothing so much as our having been able to form constitutions in the manner which has been exemplified in this country. Even the union of so many States, is, in the eyes of the world, a wonder; the harmonious establishment of a common Government over them all, a miracle. I cannot but flatter myself that without a miracle, we shall be able to arrange all difficulties. I never have despaired, notwithstanding all the threatening appearances we have passed through. I have now more than a hope—a consoling confidence—that we shall at last find that our labors have not been in vain."

Mr. MADISON was associated with his friend Jefferson in the institution of the University of Virginia, and after his decease was placed at its head, under the modest and unassuming title of Rector. He was also the President of an Agricultural Society in the county of his residence, and in that capacity delivered an address, which the practical farmer and the classical scholar may read with equal profit and delight.

In the midst of these occupations the declining days of the Philosopher, the Statesman, and the Patriot were past, until the 28th day of June last, the anniversary of the day on which the ratification of the Convention of Virginia in 1788 had affixed the seal of JAMES MADISON as the father of the Constitution of the United



States, when his earthly part sunk without a struggle into the grave, and a spirit bright as the seraphim that surround the throne of omnipotence, ascended to the bosom of his God.

This Constitution, my countrymen, is the great result of the North American revolution. This is the giant stride in the improvement of the condition of the human race, consummated in a period of less than one hundred years. Of the signers of the address to George the Third in the Congress of 1774—of the signers of the Declaration of Independence in 1776—of the signers of the Articles of Confederation in 1781, and of the signers of the federal and national Constitution of Government under which we live, with enjoyments never before allotted to man, not one remains in the land of the living. The last survivor of them all was he to honor whose memory we are here assembled at once with mourning and with joy. We reverse the order of sentiment and reflection of the ancient Persian king—we look *back* on the century gone by—we look around with anxious and eager eye for *one* of that illustrious host of Patriots and heroes, under whose guidance the revolution of American Independence was begun, and continued and completed. We look around in vain. To them this crowded theatre, full of human life, in all its stages of existence, full of the glowing exultation of youth, of the steady maturity of manhood, the sparkling eyes of beauty, and the grey hairs of reverend age—all this to them is as the solitude of the sepulchre. We think of this and say, how short is human life! But then, *then*, we turn back our thoughts again, to the scene over which the falling curtain has but now closed upon the drama of the day. From the saddening thought that they are no more, we call for comfort upon the memory of what they *were*, and our hearts leap for joy, that they were our fathers. We see them, true and faithful subjects of their sovereign, first meeting with firm but respectful remonstrance, the approach of usurpation upon their rights. We see them, fearless in their fortitude, and confident in the righteousness of their cause, bid defiance to the arm of power, and declare themselves Independent States. We see them, waging for seven years a war of desolation and of glory, in most unequal contest with their own unnatural step-mother, the mistress of the seas, till under the sign manual of their king, their Independence

was acknowledged—and last and best of all, we see them, toiling in war and in peace to form and perpetuate an union, under forms of Government intricately but skilfully adjusted so as to secure to themselves and their posterity the priceless blessings of inseparable liberty and law.

Their days on earth are ended, and yet their century has not passed away. *Their* portion of the blessings which they thus labored to secure, they have enjoyed, and transmitted to *us*, their posterity. We enjoy them as an inheritance—won, not by our toils—watered, not with our tears—saddened, not by the shedding of any blood of ours. The gift of heaven through their sufferings and their achievements—but not without a charge of corresponding duty incumbent upon ourselves.

And what, my friends and fellow citizens—what is that duty of our own? Is it to remonstrate to the adder's ear of a king beyond the Atlantic wave, and claim from him the restoration of violated rights? No. Is it to sever the ties of kindred and of blood with the people from whom we sprang? To cast away the precious name of Britons, and be no more the countrymen of Shakspeare and Milton—of Newton and Locke—of Chatham and Burke? Or more and worse, is it to meet *their* countrymen in the deadly conflict of a seven years' war? No. Is it the last and greatest of the duties fulfilled by them? Is it to lay the foundations of the fairest Government and the mightiest nation that ever floated on the tide of time? No! These awful and solemn duties were allotted to them; and by them they were faithfully performed. What then is our duty?

Is it not to preserve, to cherish, to *improve* the inheritance which they have left us—won by their toils—watered by their tears—saddened but fertilized by their blood? Are we the sons of worthy sires, and in the onward march of time have they achieved in the career of human improvement so much, only that our posterity and theirs may blush for the contrast between their unexampled energies and our nerveless impotence? between their more than Herculean labors and our indolent repose? No, my fellow citizens, far be from us; far be from you, for he who now addresses you has but a few short days before he shall be called to join the multitude of ages past—far be from you the reproach or the suspicion of such a degrading

contrast. You too have the solemn duty to perform, of improving the condition of your species, by improving your own. Not in the great and strong wind of a revolution, which rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord—for the Lord is not in the wind—not in the earthquake of a revolutionary war, marching to the onset between the battle field and the scaffold—for the Lord is not in the earthquake—not in the fire of civil dissension—in war between the members and the head—in nullification of the laws of the Union by the forcible resistance of one refractory State—for the Lord is not in the fire; and *that* fire was never kindled by your fathers! No! it is in the still small voice that succeeded the whirlwind, the earthquake and the fire. The voice that stills the raging of the waves and the tumults of the people—that spoke the words of peace—of harmony—of union. And for that voice, may you and your children's children, "to the last syllable of recorded time," fix your eyes upon the memory, and listen with your ears to the life of JAMES MADISON.

# THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

## GILBERT MOTTIER DE LAFAYETTE.\*

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IF the authority by which I am now called to address you is one of the highest honors that could be conferred upon a citizen of this Union by his countrymen, I cannot dissemble to myself that it embraces at the same time one of the most arduous duties that could be imposed. Grateful to you for the honor conferred upon me by your invitation, a sentiment of irrepressible and fearful diffidence absorbs every faculty of my soul in contemplating the magnitude, the difficulties, and the delicacy of the task which it has been your pleasure to assign to me.

I am to speak to the North American States and People, assembled here in the persons of their honored and confidential lawgivers and representatives. I am to speak to them, by their own appointment, upon the life and character of a man whose life was, for nearly threescore years, the history of the civilized world—of a man, of whose character, to say that it is indissolubly identified with the Revolution of our Independence, is little more than to mark the features of his childhood—of a man, the personified image of self-circumscribed liberty. Nor can it escape the most superficial observation, that, in speaking to the fathers of the land upon the life and character of LAFAYETTE, I cannot forbear to touch upon topics which are yet deeply convulsing the world, both of opinion and of action. I am to walk between burning ploughshares—to tread upon fires which have not yet even collected cinders to cover them.

If, in addressing their countrymen upon their most important interests, the orators of antiquity were accustomed to begin by supplication to their gods that nothing unsuitable to be said, or unworthy to be heard, might escape from their

lips, how much more forcible is my obligation to invoke the favor of Him “who touched Isaiah’s hallowed lips with fire,” not only to extinguish in the mind every conception unadapted to the grandeur and sublimity of the theme, but to draw from the bosom of the deepest conviction, thoughts congenial to the merits which it is the duty of the discourse to unfold, and words not unworthy of the dignity of the auditory before whom I appear.

In order to form a just estimate of the life and character of Lafayette, it may be necessary to advert, not only to the circumstances connected with his birth, education, and lineage, but to the political condition of his country and of Great Britain, her national rival and adversary, at the time of his birth, and during his years of childhood.

On the sixth day of September, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, the hereditary monarch of the British Islands was a native of Germany. A rude, illiterate old soldier of the wars for the Spanish succession; little versed even in the language of the nations over which he ruled; educated to the maxims and principles of the feudal law; of openly licentious life, and of moral character far from creditable:—he styled himself, by the grace of God, of Great Britain, France, and Ireland, King; but there was another and real King of France, no better, perhaps worse, than himself, and with whom he was then at war. This was Louis, the fifteenth of the name, great-grandson of his immediate predecessor, Louis the Fourteenth, sometimes denominated the Great. These two kings held their thrones by the law of hereditary succession, variously modified, in France by the Roman Catholic, and in Britain by Protestant Reformed Christianity.

They were at war—chiefly for conflicting

\* Delivered at the request of both houses of the Congress of the United States, before them, in the House of Representatives at Washington, on the 31st Dec., 1834.

claims to the possession of the western wilderness of North America—a prize, the capabilities of which are now unfolding themselves with a grandeur and magnificence unexampled in the history of the world; but of which, if the nominal possession had remained in either of the two princes, who were staking their kingdoms upon the issue of the strife, the buffalo and the beaver, with their hunter, the Indian savage, would, at this day, have been, as they then were, the only inhabitants.

In this war, GEORGE WASHINGTON, then at the age of twenty-four, was on the side of the British German King, a youthful, but heroic combatant; and, in the same war, the father of Lafayette was on the opposite side, exposing his life in the heart of Germany, for the cause of the King of France.

On that day, the sixth of September, one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, was born GILBERT MOTTIER DE LAFAYETTE, at the Castle of Chavaniac, in Auvergne, and a few months after his birth his father fell in battle at Minden.

Let us here observe the influence of political institutions over the destinies and the characters of men. George the Second was a German Prince; he had been made King of the British Islands by the accident of his birth: that is to say, because his great-grandmother had been the daughter of James the First; that great-grandmother had been married to the King of Bohemia, and her youngest daughter had been married to the Elector of Hanover. George the Second's father was her son, and, when James the Second had been expelled from his throne and his country by the indignation of his people, revolted against his tyranny, and when his two daughters, who succeeded him, had died without issue, George the First, the son of the Electress of Hanover, became King of Great Britain, by the settlement of an Act of Parliament, blending together the principle of hereditary succession with that of Reformed Protestant Christianity, and the rites of the Church of England.

The throne of France was occupied by virtue of the same principle of hereditary succession, differently modified, and blended with the Christianity of the Church of Rome. From this line of succession all females were inflexibly excluded. Louis the Fifteenth, at the age of six years, had become the absolute sovereign

of France, because he was the great-grandson of his immediate predecessor. He was of the third generation in descent from the preceding king, and, by the law of primogeniture ingrafted upon that of lineal succession, did, by the death of his ancestor, forthwith succeed, though in childhood, to an absolute throne, in preference to numerous descendants from that same ancestor, then in full vigor of manhood.

The first reflection that must recur to a rational being, in contemplating these two results of the principle of hereditary succession, as resorted to for designating the rulers of nations, is, that two persons more unfit to occupy the thrones of Britain and of France, at the time of their respective accessions, could scarcely have been found upon the face of the globe—George the Second, a foreigner, the son and grandson of foreigners, born beyond the seas, educated in uncongenial manners, ignorant of the constitution, of the laws, even of the language of the people over whom he was to rule; and Louis the Fifteenth, an infant, incapable of discerning his right hand from his left. Yet, strange as it may sound to the ear of unsophisticated reason, the British Nation were wedded to the belief that this act of settlement, fixing their crown upon the heads of this succession of total strangers, was the brightest and most glorious exemplification of their national freedom; and not less strange, if aught in the imperfection of human reason could seem strange, was that deep conviction of the French People, at the same period, that *their* chief glory and happiness consisted in the vehemence of their affection for their king, because he was descended in an unbroken male line of genealogy from Saint Louis.

One of the fruits of this line of hereditary succession, modified by sectarian principles of religion, was to make the peace and war, the happiness or misery of the people of the British Empire, dependant upon the fortunes of the Electorate of Hanover—the personal domain of their imported king. This was a result calamitous alike to the people of Hanover, of Britain, and of France; for it was *one* of the two causes of that dreadful war then waging between them; and as the cause, so was this a principal theatre of that disastrous war. It was at Minden, in the heart of the Electorate of Hanover, that the father of Lafayette fell, and left him an orphan, a victim to that war, and to



the principle of hereditary succession from which it emanated.

Thus then, it was on the 6th of September, 1757, the day when Lafayette was born. The kings of France and Great Britain were seated upon their thrones by virtue of the principle of hereditary succession, variously modified and blended with different forms of religious faith, and they were waging war against each other, and exhausting the blood and treasure of their people for causes in which neither of the nations had any beneficial or lawful interest.

In this war the father of Lafayette fell in the cause of his king, but not of his country. He was an officer of an invading army, the instrument of his sovereign's wanton ambition and lust of conquest. The people of the Electorate of Hanover had done no wrong to him or to his country. When his son came to an age capable of understanding the irreparable loss that he had suffered, and to reflect upon the causes of his father's fate, there was no drop of consolation mingled in the cup, from the consideration that he had died for his country. And when the youthful mind was awakened to meditation upon the rights of mankind, the principles of freedom, and theories of government, it cannot be difficult to perceive, in the illustrations of his own family records, the source of that *aversion to hereditary rule*, perhaps the most distinguishing feature of his political opinions, and to which he adhered through all the vicissitudes of his life.

In the same war, and at the same time, George Washington was armed, a loyal subject, in support of his king; but to him that was also the cause of his country. His commission was not in the army of George the Second, but issued under the authority of the Colony of Virginia, the province in which he received his birth. On the borders of that province, the war in its most horrid forms was waged—not a war of mercy and of courtesy, like that of the civilized embattled legions of Europe, but war to the knife—the war of Indian savages, terrible to man, but more terrible to the tender sex, and most terrible to helpless infancy. In defence of his country against the ravages of such a war, Washington, in the dawn of manhood, had drawn his sword, as if Providence, with deliberate purpose, had sanctified for him the practice of war, all-detestable and unhallowed as it is, that he might, in a

cause, virtuous and exalted by its motive and its end, be trained and fitted in a congenial school to march in aftertimes the leader of heroes in the war of his country's Independence.

At the time of the birth of Lafayette, this war, which was to make him a fatherless child, and in which Washington was laying broad and deep, in the defence and protection of his native land, the foundations of his unrivalled renown, was but in its early stage. It was to continue five years longer, and was to close with the total extinguishment of the colonial dominion of France on the continent of North America. The deep humiliation of France, and the triumphant ascendancy on this continent of her rival, were the first results of this great national conflict. The complete expulsion of France from North America seemed, to the superficial vision of men, to fix the British power over these extensive regions on foundations immovable as the everlasting hills.

Let us pass in imagination a period of only twenty years, and alight upon the borders of the river Brandywine. Washington is Commander-in-chief of the armies of the United States of America—war is again raging in the heart of his native land—hostile armies of one and the same name, blood, and language, are arrayed for battle on the banks of the stream; and Philadelphia, where the United States are in Congress assembled, and whence their Decree of Independence has gone forth, is the destined prize to the conflict of the day. Who is that tall, slender youth, of foreign air and aspect, scarcely emerged from the years of boyhood, and fresh from the walls of a college; fighting, a volunteer, at the side of Washington, bleeding, unconsciously to himself, and rallying his men to secure the retreat of the scattered American ranks? It is GILBERT MOTTIER DE LAFAYETTE—the son of the victim of Minden; and he is bleeding in the cause of North American Independence and of freedom.

We pause one moment to inquire what was this cause of North American Independence, and what were the motives and inducements to the youthful stranger to devote himself, his life, and fortune, to it.

The people of the British Colonies in North America, after a controversy of ten years' duration with their sovereign beyond the seas, upon an attempt by him and his parliament to tax them without their consent, had been constrain-

ed by necessity to declare themselves independent—to dissolve the tie of their allegiance to him—to renounce their right to his protection, and to assume their station among the independent civilized nations of the earth. This had been done with a deliberation and solemnity unexampled in the history of the world—done in the midst of a civil war, differing in character from any of those which for centuries before had desolated Europe. The war had arisen upon a question between the rights of the people and the powers of their government. The discussions, in the progress of the controversy, had opened to the contemplations of men the first foundations of civil society and of government. The war of independence began by litigation upon a petty stamp on paper, and a tax of three pence a pound upon tea; but these broke up the fountains of the great deep, and the deluge ensued. Had the British Parliament the *right* to tax the people of the colonies in another hemisphere, not represented in the Imperial Legislature? They affirmed they had: the people of the colonies insisted they had not. There were ten years of pleading before they came to an issue; and all the legitimate sources of power, and all the primitive elements of freedom, were scrutinized, debated, analyzed, and elucidated, before the lighting of the torch of Ate, and her cry of havoc upon letting slip the dogs of war.

When the day of conflict came, the issue of the contest was necessarily changed. The people of the colonies had maintained the contest on the principle of resisting the invasion of chartered rights—first by argument and remonstrance, and finally by appeal to the sword. But with the war came the necessary exercise of sovereign powers. The Declaration of Independence justified itself as the only possible remedy for insufferable wrongs. It seated itself upon the first foundations of the law of nature, and the incontestable doctrine of human rights. There was no longer any question of the constitutional powers of the British Parliament, or of violated colonial charters. Thenceforward the American Nation supported its existence by war; and the British Nation, by war, was contending for conquest. As, between the two parties, the single question at issue was Independence—but in the confederate existence of the North American Union, LIBERTY—not only their own liberty, but the vital principle

of liberty to the whole race of civilized man, was involved.

It was at this stage of the conflict, and immediately after the Declaration of Independence, that it drew the attention, and called into action the moral sensibilities and the intellectual faculties of Lafayette, then in the nineteenth year of his age.

The war was revolutionary. It began by the dissolution of the British Government in the colonies; the people of which were, by that operation, left without any government whatever. They were then at one and the same time maintaining their independent national existence by war, and forming new social compacts for their own government thenceforward. The construction of civil society; the extent and the limitations of organized power; the establishment of a system of government combining the greatest enlargement of individual liberty with the most perfect preservation of public order, were the continual occupations of every mind. The consequences of this state of things to the history of mankind, and especially of Europe, were foreseen by none. Europe saw nothing but the war; a people struggling for liberty, and against oppression; and the people in every part of Europe sympathized with the people of the American Colonies.

With their governments it was not so. The people of the American Colonies were insurgents; all governments abhor insurrection; they were revolted colonists. The great maritime powers of Europe had colonies of their own, to which the example of resistance against oppression might be contagious. The American Colonies were stigmatized in all the official acts of the British Government as *rebels*; and rebellion to the governing part of mankind is as the sin of witchcraft. The governments of Europe, therefore were, at heart, on the side of the British Government in this war, and the people of Europe were on the side of the American people.

Lafayette, by his position and condition in life, was one of those who, governed by the ordinary impulses which influence and control the conduct of men, would have sided in sentiment with the British or Royal cause.

Lafayette was born a subject of the most absolute and most splendid monarchy of Europe, and in the highest rank of her proud and

chivalrous nobility. He had been educated at a college of the University of Paris, founded by the royal munificence of Louis the Fourteenth, or of his minister, Cardinal Richelieu. Left an orphan in early childhood, with the inheritance of a princely fortune, he had been married, at sixteen years of age, to a daughter of the house of Noailles, the most distinguished family of the kingdom, scarcely deemed in public consideration inferior to that which wore the crown. He came into active life, at the change from boy to man, a husband and a father, in the full enjoyment of every thing that avarice could covet, with a certain prospect before him of all that ambition could crave. Happy in his domestic affections, incapable, from the benignity of his nature, of envy, hatred, or revenge, a life of "ignoble ease and indolent repose" seemed to be that which nature and fortune had combined to prepare before him. To men of ordinary mould this condition would have led to a life of luxurious apathy and sensual indulgence. Such was the life into which, from the operation of the same causes, Louis the Fifteenth had sunk, with his household and court, while Lafayette was rising to manhood, surrounded by the contamination of their example. Had his natural endowments been even of the higher and nobler order of such as adhere to virtue, even in the lap of prosperity, and in the bosom of temptation, he might have lived and died a pattern of the nobility of France, to be classed, in aftertimes, with the Turennes and the Montausiers of the age of Louis the Fourteenth, or with the Villars or the Lamoignons of the age immediately preceding his own.

But as, in the firmament of heaven that rolls over our heads, there is, among the stars of the first magnitude, one so pre-eminent in splendor, as, in the opinion of astronomers, to constitute a class by itself, so, in the fourteen hundred years of the French Monarchy, among the multitudes of great and mighty men which it has evolved, the name of Lafayette stands unrivalled in the solitude of glory.

In entering upon the threshold of life, a career was to open before him. He had the option of the court and the camp. An office was tendered to him in the household of the king's brother, the Count de Provence, since successively a royal exile and a reinstated king. The servitude and inaction of a court had no charms for him; he preferred a commission in the

army, and, at the time of the Declaration of Independence, was a captain of dragoons in garrison at Metz.

There, at an entertainment given by his relative, the Marechal de Broglie, the commandant of the place, to the Duke of Gloucester, brother to the British King, and then a transient traveler through that part of France, he learns, as an incident of intelligence received that morning by the English Prince from London, that the Congress of Rebels, at Philadelphia, had issued a Declaration of Independence. A conversation ensues upon the causes which have contributed to produce this event, and upon the consequences which may be expected to flow from it. The imagination of Lafayette has caught across the Atlantic tide the spark emitted from the Declaration of Independence; his heart has kindled at the shock, and, before he slumbers upon his pillow, he has resolved to devote his life and fortune to the cause.

You have before you the cause and the man. The self-devotion of Lafayette was twofold. First, to the people, maintaining a bold and seemingly desperate struggle against oppression, and for national existence. Secondly, and chiefly, to the principles of their Declaration, which then first unfurled before his eyes the consecrated standard of human rights. To that standard, without an instant of hesitation, he repaired. Where it would lead him, it is scarcely probable that he himself then foresaw. It was then identical with the stars and stripes of the American Union, floating to the breeze from the Hall of Independence, at Philadelphia. Nor sordid avarice, nor vulgar ambition, could point his footsteps to the pathway leading to that banner. To the love of ease or pleasure nothing could be more repulsive. Something may be allowed to the beatings of the youthful breast, which make ambition virtue, and something to the spirit of military adventure, imbibed from his profession, and which he felt in common with many others. France, Germany, Poland, furnished to the armies of this Union, in our revolutionary struggle, no inconsiderable number of officers of high rank and distinguished merit. The names of Pulaski and De Kalb are numbered among the martyrs of our freedom, and their ashes repose in our soil side by side with the canonized bones of Warren and of Montgomery. To the virtues of Lafayette, a more pro-



tracted career and happier earthly destinies were reserved. To the *moral* principle of political action, the sacrifices of no other man were comparable to his. Youth, health, fortune; the favor of his king; the enjoyment of ease and pleasure; even the choicest blessings of domestic felicity—he gave them all for toil and danger in a distant land, and an almost hopeless cause; but it was the cause of justice, and of the rights of human kind.

The resolve is firmly fixed, and it now remains to be carried into execution. On the 7th of December, 1776, Silas Deane, then a secret agent of the American Congress at Paris, stipulates with the Marquis de Lafayette that he shall receive a commission, to date from that day, of Major-General in the Army of the United States; and the Marquis stipulates, in return, to depart when and how Mr. Deane shall judge proper, to serve the United States with all possible zeal, without pay or emolument, reserving to himself only the liberty of returning to Europe, if his family or his king should recall him.

Neither his family nor his king were willing that he should depart; nor had Mr. Deane the power, either to conclude this contract, or to furnish the means of his conveyance to America. Difficulties rise up before him only to be dispersed, and obstacles thicken only to be surmounted. The day after the signature of the contract, Mr. Deane's agency was superseded by the arrival of Doctor Benjamin Franklin and Arthur Lee as his colleagues in commission; nor did they think themselves authorized to confirm his engagement. Lafayette is not to be discouraged. The commissioners extenuate nothing of the unpromising condition of their cause. Mr. Deane avows his inability to furnish him with a passage to the United States. "The more desperate the cause," says Lafayette, "the greater need has it of my services; and, if Mr. Deane has no vessel for my passage, I shall purchase one myself, and will traverse the ocean with a selected company of my own."

Other impediments arise. His design becomes known to the British Ambassador at the Court of Versailles, who remonstrates to the French Government against it. At his instance, orders are issued for the detention of the vessel purchased by the Marquis, and fitted out at Bordeaux, and for the arrest of his person. To

elude the first of these orders, the vessel is removed from Bordeaux to the neighboring port of Passage, within the dominion of Spain. The order for his own arrest is executed; but, by stratagem and disguise, he escapes from the custody of those who have him in charge, and, before a second order can reach him, he is safe on the ocean wave, bound to the land of Independence and of freedom.

It had been necessary to clear out the vessel for an island of the West Indies; but, once at sea, he avails himself of his right as owner of the ship, and compels his captain to steer for the shores of emancipated North America. He lands, with his companions, on the 25th of April, 1777, in South Carolina, not far from Charleston, and finds a most cordial reception and hospitable welcome in the house of Major Huger.

Every detail of this adventurous expedition, full of incidents, combining with the simplicity of historical truth all the interest of romance, is so well known, and so familiar to the memory of all who hear me, that I pass them over without further notice.

From Charleston he proceeded to Philadelphia, where the Congress of the Revolution were in session, and where he offered his services in the cause. Here, again, he was met with difficulties, which, to men of ordinary minds, would have been insurmountable. Mr. Deane's contracts were so numerous, and for offices of rank so high, that it was impossible they should be ratified by the Congress. He had stipulated for the appointment of other Major-Generals; and, in the same contract with that of Lafayette, for eleven other officers, from the rank of Colonel to that of Lieutenant. To introduce these officers, strangers, scarcely one of whom could speak the language of the country, into the American army, to take rank and precedence over the native citizens whose ardent patriotism had pointed them to the standard of their country, could not, without great injustice, nor without exciting the most fatal dissensions, have been done; and this answer was necessarily given as well to Lafayette as to the other officers who had accompanied him from Europe. His reply was an offer to serve as a volunteer, and without pay. Magnanimity, thus disinterested, could not be resisted, nor could the sense of it be worthily manifested by a mere acceptance of the offer.



On the 31st of July, 1777, therefore, the following resolution and preamble are recorded upon the journals of Congress :

"Whereas, the Marquis de Lafayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connexions, and, at his own expense, come over to offer his service to the United States, without pension, or particular allowance, and is anxious to risk his life in our cause :

"Resolved, That his service be accepted, and that, in consideration of his zeal, illustrious family, and connexions, he have *the rank and commission* of Major-General in the army of the United States."

He had the rank and commission, but no command as a Major-General. With this, all personal ambition was gratified; and whatever services he might perform, he could attain no higher rank in the American army. The discontents of officers already in the service, at being superseded in command by a stripling foreigner, were disarmed; nor was the prudence of congress, perhaps, without its influence in withholding a command, which, but for a judgment premature "beyond the slow advance of years," might have hazarded something of the sacred cause itself, by confidence too hastily bestowed.

The day after the date of his commission, he was introduced to Washington, Commander-in-chief of the armies of the Confederation. It was the critical period of the campaign of 1777. The British army, commanded by Lord Howe, was advancing from the head of Elk, to which they had been transported by sea from New York, upon Philadelphia. Washington, by a counteracting movement, had been approaching from his line of defence, in the Jerseys, towards the city, and arrived there on the 1st of August. It was a meeting of congenial souls. At the close of it, Washington gave the youthful stranger an invitation to make the head-quarters of the Commander-in-chief his home: that he should establish himself there at his own time, and consider himself at all times as one of his family. It was natural that, in giving this invitation, he should remark the contrast of the situation in which it would place him with that of ease, and comfort, and luxurious enjoyment, which he had left, at the splendid court of Louis the Sixteenth, and of

his beautiful and accomplished, but ill-fated queen, then at the very summit of all which constitutes the common estimate of felicity. How deep and solemn was this contrast! No native American had undergone the trial of the same alternative. None of them, save Lafayette, had brought the same tribute, of his life, his fortune, and his honor, to a cause of a country foreign to his own. To Lafayette the soil of freedom was his country. His post of honor was the post of danger. His fireside was the field of battle. He accepted with joy the invitation of Washington, and repaired forthwith to the camp. The bond of indissoluble friendship—the friendship of heroes, was sealed from the first hour of their meeting, to last through their lives, and to live in the memory of mankind for ever.

It was, perhaps, at the suggestion of the American Commissioners in France, that this invitation was given by Washington. In a letter from them, of the 25th of May, 1777, to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, they announce that the Marquis had departed for the United States in a ship of his own, accompanied by some officers of distinction, in order to serve in our armies. They observe that he is exceedingly beloved, and that every body's good wishes attend him. They cannot but hope that he will meet with such a reception as will make the country and his expedition agreeable to him. They further say that those who censure it as imprudent in him, do nevertheless applaud his spirit; and they are satisfied that civilities and respect shown to him will be serviceable to our cause in France, as pleasing not only to his powerful relations and to the court, but to the whole French nation. They finally add, that he had left a beautiful young wife, and for her sake, particularly, they hoped that his bravery and ardent desire to distinguish himself would be a little restrained by the General's (Washington's) prudence, so as not to permit his being hazarded much, but upon some important occasion.

The head-quarters of Washington, serving as a volunteer, with the rank and commission of a Major-General without command, was precisely the station adapted to the development of his character, to his own honor, and that of the army, and to the prudent management of the country's cause. To him it was at once a severe school of experience, and a rigorous test of

merit. But it was not the place to restrain him from exposure to danger. The time at which he joined the camp was one of pre-eminent peril. The British Government, and the Commander-in-chief of the British forces, had imagined that the possession of Philadelphia, combined with that of the line along the Hudson river, from the Canadian frontier to the city of New York, would be fatal to the American cause. By the capture of Burgoyne and his army, that portion of the project sustained a total defeat. The final issue of the war was indeed sealed with the capitulation of the 17th of October, 1777, at Saratoga—sealed, not with the subjugation, but with the independence of the North American Union.

In the Southern campaign the British commander was more successful. The fall of Philadelphia was the result of the battle of Brandywine, on the 11th of September. This was the first action in which Lafayette was engaged, and the first lesson of his practical military school was a lesson of misfortune. In the attempt to rally the American troops in their retreat, he received a musket-ball in the leg. He was scarcely conscious of the wound till made sensible of it by the loss of blood, and even then ceased not his exertions in the field till he had secured and covered the retreat.

This casualty confined him for some time to his bed at Philadelphia, and afterwards detained him some days at Bethlehem; but within six weeks he rejoined the head-quarters of Washington, near Whitemarsh. He soon became anxious to obtain a command equal to his rank, and in the short space of time that he had been with the Commander-in-chief, had so thoroughly obtained his confidence as to secure an earnest solicitation from him to congress in his favor. In a letter to congress of the 1st November, 1777, he says: "The Marquis de Lafayette is extremely solicitous of having a command equal to his rank. I do not know in what light congress will view the matter, but it appears to me, from a consideration of his illustrious and important connexions, the attachment which he has manifested for our cause, and the consequences which his return in disgust might produce, that it will be advisable to gratify him in his wishes; and the more so, as several gentlemen from France, who came over under some assurances, have gone back disappointed in their expectations.

His conduct with respect to them stands in a favorable point of view; having interested himself to remove their uneasiness, and urged the impropriety of their making any unfavorable representations upon their arrival at home; and in all his letters he has placed our affairs in the best situation he could. Besides, he is sensible; discreet in his manners; has made great proficiency in our language; and, from the disposition he discovered at the battle of Brandywine, possesses a large share of bravery and military ardor."

Perhaps one of the highest encomiums ever pronounced of a man in public life, is that of an historian eminent for his profound acquaintance with mankind, who, in painting a great character by a single line, says that he was just equal to all the duties of the highest offices which he attained, and never above them. There are in some men qualities which dazzle and consume to little or no valuable purpose. They seldom belong to the great benefactors of mankind. They were not the qualities of Washington or Lafayette. The testimonial offered by the American commander to his young friend, after a probation of several months, and after the severe test of the disastrous day of Brandywine, was precisely adapted to the man in whose favor it was given, and to the object which it was to accomplish. What earnestness of purpose! what sincerity of conviction! what energetic simplicity of expression! what thorough delineation of character! The merits of Lafayette, to the eye of Washington, are the candor and generosity of his disposition—the indefatigable industry of application which, in the course of a few months, has already given him the mastery of a foreign language—good sense—discretion of manners, an attribute not only unusual in early years, but doubly rare in alliance with that enthusiasm so signally marked by his self-devotion to the American cause; and, to crown all the rest, the bravery and military ardor so brilliantly manifested at the Brandywine. Here is no random praise; no unmeaning panegyric. The cluster of qualities, all plain and simple, but so seldom found in union together, so generally incompatible with one another, these are the properties eminently trustworthy, in the judgment of Washington; and these are the properties which his discernment has found in Lafayette, and which urge

him thus earnestly to advise the gratification of his wish by the assignment of a command equal to the rank which had been granted to his zeal and his illustrious name.

The recommendation of Washington had its immediate effect; and on the 1st of December, 1777, it was resolved by Congress that he should be informed it was highly agreeable to congress that the Marquis de Lafayette should be appointed to the command of a division in the Continental Army.

He received accordingly such an appointment; and a plan was organized in congress for a second invasion of Canada, at the head of which he was placed. This expedition, originally projected without consultation with the commander-in-chief, might be connected with the temporary dissatisfaction, in the community and in congress, at the ill-success of his endeavors to defend Philadelphia, which rival and unfriendly partisans were too ready to compare with the splendid termination, by the capture of Burgoyne and his army, of the northern campaign, under the command of General Gates. To foreclose all suspicion of participation in these views, Lafayette proceeded to the seat of congress, and, accepting the important charge which it was proposed to assign to him, obtained at his particular request that he should be considered as an officer detached from the army of Washington, and to remain under his orders. He then repaired in person to Albany, to take command of the troops who were to assemble at that place, in order to cross the lakes on the ice, and attack Montreal; but on arriving at Albany he found none of the promised preparations in readiness—they were never effected. Congress some time after relinquished the design, and the Marquis was ordered to rejoin the army of Washington.

In the succeeding month of May, his military talent was displayed by the masterly retreat effected in the presence of an overwhelming superiority of the enemy's force from the position at Barren Hill.

He was soon after distinguished at the battle of Monmouth; and in September, 1778, a resolution of congress declared their high sense of his services, not only in the field, but in his exertions to conciliate and heal dissensions between the officers of the French fleet under the command of Count d'Estaing and some of the native officers of our army. These dissen-

sions had arisen in the first moments of co-operation in the service, and had threatened pernicious consequences.

In the month of April, 1776, the combined wisdom of the Count de Vergennes and of Mr. Turgot, the Prime Minister, and the Financier of Louis the Sixteenth, had brought him to the conclusion that the event most desirable to France, with regard to the controversy between Great Britain and her American Colonies, was that the insurrection should be suppressed. This judgment, evincing only the total absence of all *moral* considerations, in the estimate, by these eminent statesmen, of what was desirable to France, had undergone a great change by the close of the year 1777. The Declaration of Independence had changed the question between the parties. The popular feeling of France was all on the side of the Americans. The daring and romantic movement of Lafayette, in defiance of the government itself, then highly favored by public opinion, was followed by universal admiration. The spontaneous spirit of the people gradually spread itself even over the rank corruption of the court; a suspicious and deceptive neutrality succeeded to an ostensible exclusion of the Insurgents from the ports of France, till the capitulation of Burgoyne satisfied the casuists of international law at Versailles, that the suppression of the insurrection was no longer the most desirable of events; but that the United States were, *de facto*, sovereign and independent, and that France might conclude a Treaty of Commerce with them, without giving just cause of offence to the stepmother country. On the 6th of February, 1778, a Treaty of Commerce between France and the United States was concluded, and with it, on the same day, a Treaty of eventual Defensive Alliance, to take effect only in the event of Great Britain's resenting, by war against France, the consummation of the Commercial Treaty. The war immediately ensued, and in the summer of 1778, a French fleet, under the command of Count d'Estaing, was sent to co-operate with the forces of the United States for the maintenance of their Independence.

By these events the position of the Marquis de Lafayette was essentially changed. It became necessary for him to reinstate himself in the good graces of his sovereign, offended at his absenting himself from his country without



permission, but gratified with the distinction which he had acquired by gallant deeds in a service now become that of France herself. At the close of the campaign of 1778, with the approbation of his friend and patron, the Commander-in-chief, he addressed a letter to the President of Congress, representing his then present circumstances with the confidence of affection and gratitude, observing that the sentiments which bound him to his country could never be more properly spoken of than in the presence of men who had done so much for their own. "As long," continued he, "as I thought I could dispose of myself, I made it my pride and pleasure to fight under American colors, in defence of a cause which I dare more particularly call *ours*, because I had the good fortune of bleeding for her. Now, Sir, that France is involved in a war, I am urged, by a sense of my duty, as well as by the love of my country, to present myself before the king, and know in what manner he judges proper to employ my services. The most agreeable of all will always be such as may enable me to serve the common cause among those whose friendship I had the happiness to obtain, and whose fortune I had the honor to follow in less smiling times. That reason, and others, which I leave to the feelings of congress, engage me to beg from them the liberty of going home for the next winter.

"As long as there were any hopes of an active campaign, I did not think of leaving the field; now that I see a very peaceable and undisturbed moment, I take this opportunity of waiting on congress."

In the remainder of the letter he solicited that, in the event of his request being granted, he might be considered as a soldier on furlough, heartily wishing to regain his colors and his esteemed and beloved fellow-soldiers. And he closes with a tender of any services which he might be enabled to render to the American cause in his own country.

On the receipt of this letter, accompanied by one from General Washington, recommending to congress, in terms most honourable to the Marquis, a compliance with his request, that body immediately passed resolutions granting him an unlimited leave of absence, with permission to return to the United States at his own most convenient time; that the President of Congress should write him a letter returning him the thanks of congress for that disinterest-

ed zeal which had led him to America, and for the services he had rendered to the United States by the exertion of his courage and abilities on many signal occasions; and that the Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at the Court of Versailles should be directed to cause an elegant sword, with proper devices, to be made, and presented to him in the name of the United States. These resolutions were communicated to him in a letter expressive of the sensibility congenial to them, from the President of Congress, Henry Laurens.

He embarked in January, 1779, in the frigate *Alliance*, at Boston, and, on the succeeding 12th day of February, presented himself at Versailles. Twelve months had already elapsed since the conclusion of the treaties of commerce and of eventual alliance between France and the United States. They had, during the greater part of that time, been deeply engaged in war with a common cause against Great Britain, and it was the cause in which Lafayette had been shedding his blood; yet, instead of receiving him with open arms, as the pride and ornament of his country, a cold and hollow-hearted order was issued to him not to present himself at court, but to consider himself under arrest, with permission to receive visits only from his relations. This ostensible mark of the royal displeasure was to last eight days, and Lafayette manifested his sense of it only by a letter to the Count de Vergennes, inquiring whether the interdiction upon him to receive visits was to be considered as extending to that of Doctor Franklin. The sentiment of universal admiration which had followed him at his first departure, greatly increased by his splendid career of service during the two years of his absence, indemnified him for the indignity of the courtly rebuke.

He remained in France through the year 1779, and returned to the scene of action early in the ensuing year. He continued in the French service, and was appointed to command the king's own regiment of dragoons, stationed during the year in various parts of the kingdom, and holding an incessant correspondence with the ministers of Foreign Affairs and of War, urging the employment of a land and naval force in aid of the American cause. "The Marquis de Lafayette," says Doctor Franklin, in a letter of the 4th of March, 1780, to the President of Congress, "who during



his residence in France, has been extremely zealous in supporting our cause *on all occasions*, returns again to fight for it. He is infinitely esteemed and beloved here, and I am persuaded will do every thing in his power to merit a continuance of the same affection from America."

Immediately after his arrival in the United States, it was, on the 16th of May, 1780, resolved in congress, that they considered his return to America to resume his command, as a fresh proof of the disinterested zeal and persevering attachment which have justly recommended him to the public confidence and applause, and that they received with pleasure a tender of the further services of so gallant and meritorious an officer.

From this time until the termination of the campaign of 1781, by the surrender of Lord Cornwallis and his army at Yorktown, his service was of incessant activity, always signalized by military talents unsurpassed, and by a spirit never to be subdued. At the time of the treason of Arnold, Lafayette was accompanying his commander-in-chief to an important conference and consultation with the French General, Rochambeau; and then, as in every stage of the war, it seemed as if the position which he occupied, his personal character, his individual relations with Washington, with the officers of both the allied armies, and with the armies themselves, had been specially ordered to promote and secure that harmony and mutual good understanding indispensable to the ultimate success of the common cause. His position, too, as a foreigner by birth, a European, a volunteer in the American service, and a person of high rank in his native country, pointed him out as peculiarly suited to the painful duty of deciding upon the character of the crime, and upon the fate of the British officer, the accomplice and victim of the detested traitor, Arnold.

In the early part of the campaign of 1781, when Cornwallis, with an overwhelming force, was spreading ruin and devastation over the southern portion of the Union, we find Lafayette, with means altogether inadequate, charged with the defence of the territory of Virginia. Always equal to the emergencies in which circumstances placed him, his expedients for encountering and surmounting the obstacles which they cast in his way are invariably

stamped with the peculiarities of his character. The troops placed under his command for the defence of Virginia, were chiefly taken from the eastern regiments, unseasoned to the climate of the south, and prejudiced against it as unfavorable to the health of the natives of the more rigorous regions of the north. Desertions became frequent, till they threatened the very dissolution of the corps. Instead of resorting to military execution to retain his men, he appeals to the sympathies of honor. He states, in general orders, the great danger and difficulty of the enterprise upon which he is about to embark; represents the only possibility by which it can promise success, the faithful adherence of the soldiers to their chief, and his confidence that they will not abandon him. He then adds, that if, however, any individual of the detachment was unwilling to follow him, a passport to return to his home should be forthwith granted him upon his application. It is to a cause like that of American Independence that resources like this are congenial. After these general orders, nothing more was heard of desertion. The very cripples of the army preferred paying for their own transportation, to follow the corps, rather than to ask for the dismissal which had been made so easily accessible to all.

But how shall the deficiencies of the military chest be supplied? The want of money was heavily pressing upon the service in every direction. Where are the sinews of war? How are the troops to march without shoes, linen, clothing of all descriptions, and other necessities of life? Lafayette has found them all. From the patriotic merchants of Baltimore he obtains, on the pledge of his own personal credit, a loan of money, adequate to the purchase of the materials; and from the fair hands of the daughters of the monumental city, even then worthy to be so called, he obtains the toil of making up the needed garments.

The details of the campaign, from its unpromising outset, when Cornwallis, the British commander, exulted in anticipation that the boy could not escape him, till the storming of the twin redoubts, in emulation of gallantry by the valiant Frenchmen of Viomesnil, and the American fellow-soldiers of Lafayette, led by him to victory at Yorktown, must be left to the recording pen of history. Both redoubts were carried at the point of the sword, and Cornwal-

lis, with averted face, surrendered his sword to Washington.

This was the last vital struggle of the war, which, however, lingered through another year rather of negotiation than of action. Immediately after the capitulation at Yorktown, Lafayette asked and obtained again a leave of absence to visit his family and his country, and with this closed his military service in the field during the Revolutionary War. But it was not for the individual enjoyment of his renown that he returned to France. The resolutions of congress accompanying that which gave him a discretionary leave of absence, while honorary in the highest degree to him, were equally marked by a grant of virtual credentials for negotiation, and by the trust of confidential powers, together with a letter of the warmest commendation of the gallant soldier to the favor of his king. The ensuing year was consumed in preparations for a formidable combined French and Spanish expedition against the British Islands in the West Indies, and particularly the Island of Jamaica; thence to recoil upon New York, and to pursue the offensive war into Canada. The fleet destined for this gigantic undertaking was already assembled at Cadiz; and Lafayette, appointed the chief of the staff, was there ready to embark upon this perilous adventure, when, on the 30th of November, 1782, the preliminary treaties of peace were concluded between his Britannic Majesty on one part, and the allied powers of France, Spain, and the United States of America, on the other. The first intelligence of this event received by the American congress was in the communication of a letter from Lafayette.

The war of American Independence is closed. The people of the North American Confederation are in union, sovereign and independent. Lafayette, at twenty-five years of age, has lived the life of a pariah, and illustrated the career of a hero. Had his days upon earth been then numbered, and had he then slept with his fathers, illustrious as for centuries their names had been, his name, to the end of time, would have transcended them all. Fortunate youth! fortunate beyond even the measure of his companions in arms with whom he had achieved the glorious consummation of American Independence. His fame was all his own; not cheaply earned; not ignobly won. His fellow soldiers had been the champions and defenders

of their country. They reaped for themselves, for their wives, their children, their posterity to the latest time, the rewards of their dangers and their toils. Lafayette had watched, and labored, and fought, and bled, not for himself, not for his family, not, in the first instance, even for his country. In the legendary tales of chivalry we read of tournaments at which a foreign and unknown knight suddenly presents himself, armed in complete steel, and, with the vizor down, enters the ring to contend with the assembled flower of knighthood for the prize of honor, to be awarded by the hand of beauty; bears it in triumph away, and disappears from the astonished multitude of competitors and spectators of the feats of arms. But where, in the rolls of history, where, in the fictions of romance, where, but in the life of Lafayette, has been seen the noble stranger, flying, with the tribute of his name, his rank, his affluence, his ease, his domestic bliss, his treasure, his blood, to the relief of a suffering and distant land, in the hour of her deepest calamity—baring his bosom to her foes; and not at the transient pageantry of a tournament, but for a succession of five years sharing all the vicissitudes of her fortunes; always eager to appear at the post of danger—tempering the glow of youthful ardor with the cold caution of a veteran commander; bold and daring in action; prompt in execution; rapid in pursuit; fertile in expedients; unattainable in retreat; often exposed, but never surprised, never disconcerted; eluding his enemy when within his fancied grasp; bearing upon him with irresistible sway when of force to cope with him in the conflict of arms? And what is this but the diary of Lafayette, from the day of his rallying the scattered fugitives of the Brandywine, insensible of the blood flowing from his wound, to the storming of the redoubt at Yorktown?

Henceforth, as a public man, Lafayette is to be considered as a Frenchman, always active and ardent to serve the United States, but no longer in their service as an officer. So transcendent had been his merits in the common cause, that, to reward them, the rule of progressive advancement in the armies of France was set aside for him. He received from the Minister of War a notification that from the day of his retirement from the service of the United States as a major-general, at the close of the war, he should hold the same rank in

the armies of France, to date from the day of the capitulation of Lord Cornwallis.

Henceforth he is a Frenchman, destined to perform in the history of his country a part, as peculiarly his own, and not less glorious than that which he had performed in the war of Independence. A short period of profound peace followed the great triumph of freedom. The desire of Lafayette once more to see the land of his adoption and the associates of his glory, the fellow-soldiers who had become to him as brothers, and the friend and patron of his youth, who had become to him as a father; sympathizing with their desire once more to see him—to see in their prosperity him who had first come to them in their affliction, induced him, in the year 1784, to pay a visit to the United States.

On the 4th of August, of that year, he landed at New York, and, in the space of five months from that time, visited his venerable friend at Mount Vernon, where he was then living in retirement, and traversed ten States of the Union, receiving everywhere, from their legislative assemblies, from the municipal bodies of the cities and towns through which he passed, from the officers of the army, his late associates, now restored to the virtues and occupations of private life, and even from the recent emigrants from Ireland, who had come to adopt for their country the self emancipated land, addresses of gratulation and of joy, the effusions of hearts grateful in the enjoyment of the blessings for the possession of which they had been so largely indebted to his exertions—and finally, from the United States of America in Congress assembled at Trenton.

On the 9th of December it was resolved by that body that a committee, to consist of one member from each State, should be appointed to receive, and in the name of Congress take leave of the Marquis. That they should be instructed to assure him that Congress continued to entertain the same high sense of his abilities and zeal to promote the welfare of America, both here and in Europe, which they had frequently expressed and manifested on former occasions, and which the recent marks of his attention to their commercial and other interests had perfectly confirmed. "That, as his uniform and unceasing attachment to this country has resembled that of a patriotic citizen, the United States regard him with particular

affection, and will not cease to feel an interest in whatever may concern his honor and prosperity, and that their best and kindest wishes will always attend him."

And it was further resolved, that a letter be written to his Most Christian Majesty, to be signed by his Excellency the President of Congress, expressive of the high sense which the United States in Congress assembled entertain of the zeal, talents, and meritorious services of the Marquis de Lafayette, and recommending him to the favor and patronage of his Majesty.

The first of these resolutions was, on the next day, carried into execution. At a solemn interview with the committee of Congress, received in their hall, and addressed by the chairman of their committee, John Jay, the purport of these resolutions was communicated to him. He replied in terms of fervent sensibility for the kindness manifested personally to himself; and, with allusions to the situation, the prospects, and the duties of the people of this country, he pointed out the great interests which he believed it indispensable to their welfare that they should cultivate and cherish. In the following memorable sentences the ultimate objects of his solicitude are disclosed in a tone deeply solemn and impressive:

"May this immense temple of freedom," said he, "ever stand, a lesson to oppressors, an example to the oppressed, a sanctuary for the rights of mankind! and may these happy United States attain that complete splendor and prosperity which will illustrate the blessings of their government, and for ages to come rejoice the departed souls of its founders."

Fellow-citizens! Ages have passed away since these words were spoken; but ages are the years of the existence of nations. The founders of this immense temple of freedom have all departed, save here and there a solitary exception, even while I speak, at the point of taking wing. The prayer of Lafayette is not yet consummated. Ages upon ages are still to pass away before it can have its full accomplishment; and, for its full accomplishment, his spirit, hovering over our heads, in more than echoes talks around these walls. It repeats the prayer which from his lips fifty years ago was at once a parting blessing and a prophecy; for, were it possible for the whole human race, now breathing the breath of life, to be assembled within this hall, your orator



would, in your name and in that of your constituents, appeal to them to testify for your fathers of the last generation, that, so far as has depended upon them, the blessing of Lafayette has been prophecy. Yes! this immense temple of freedom still stands, a lesson to oppressors, an example to the oppressed, and a sanctuary for the rights of mankind. Yes! with the smiles of a benignant Providence, the splendor and prosperity of these happy United States have illustrated the blessings of their government, and, we may humbly hope, have rejoiced the departed souls of its founders. For the past your fathers and you have been responsible. The charge of the future devolves upon you and upon your children. The vestal fire of freedom is in your custody. May the souls of its departed founders never be called to witness its extinction by neglect, nor a soil upon the purity of its keepers!

With this valedictory, Lafayette took, as he and those who heard him then believed, a final leave of the people of the United States. He returned to France, and arrived at Paris on the 25th of January, 1785.

He continued to take a deep interest in the concerns of the United States, and exerted his influence with the French government to obtain reductions of duties favorable to their commerce and fisheries. In the summer of 1786, he visited several of the German courts, and attended the last great review by Frederick the Second of his veteran army—a review unusually splendid, and specially remarkable by the attendance of many of the most distinguished military commanders of Europe. In the same year the Legislature of Virginia manifested the continued recollection of his services rendered to the people of that commonwealth, by a complimentary token of gratitude not less honorable than it was unusual. They resolved that two busts of Lafayette, to be executed by the celebrated sculptor, Houdon, should be procured at their expense; that one of them should be placed in their own legislative hall, and the other presented, in their name, to the municipal authorities of the city of Paris. It was accordingly presented by Mr. Jefferson, then Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States in France, and, by the permission of Louis the Sixteenth, was accepted, and, with appropriate solemnity, placed in one of the halls of the Hotel de Ville of the metropolis of France.

We have gone through one stage of the life of Lafayette; we are now to see him acting upon another theatre—in a cause still essentially the same, but in the application of its principles to his own country.

The immediately originating question which occasioned the French Revolution was the same with that from which the American Revolution had sprung—taxation of the people without their consent. For nearly two centuries the kings of France had been accustomed to levy taxes upon the people by royal ordinances. But it was necessary that these ordinances should be registered in the parliaments or judicial tribunals; and these parliaments claimed the right of remonstrating against them, and sometimes refused the registry of them itself. The members of the parliaments held their offices by purchase, but were appointed by the king, and were subject to banishment or imprisonment, at his pleasure. Louis the Fifteenth, towards the close of his reign, had abolished the parliaments, but they had been restored at the accession of his successor.

The finances of the kingdom were in extreme disorder. The minister, or comptroller general, De Calonne, after attempting various projects for obtaining the supplies, the amount and need of which he was with lavish hand daily increasing, bethought himself, at last, of calling for the counsel of others. He prevailed upon the king to convoke, not the states general, but an assembly of *notables*. There was something ridiculous in the very name by which this meeting was called, but it consisted of a selection from all the *grande*s and dignitaries of the kingdom. The two brothers of the king—all the princes of the blood, archbishops, and bishops, dukes and peers—the chancellor and presiding members of the parliaments; distinguished members of the noblesse, and the mayors and chief magistrates of a few of the principal cities of the kingdom, constituted this assembly. It was a representation of every interest but that of the people. They were appointed by the king—were members of the highest aristocracy, and were assembled with the design that their deliberations should be confined exclusively to the subjects submitted to their consideration by the minister. These were certain plans devised by him for replenishing the insolvent treasury, by assessments upon the privileged classes, the very princes, nobles, ecclesiastics, and



magistrates exclusively represented in the assembly itself.

Of this meeting the Marquis de Lafayette was a member. It was held in February, 1787, and terminated in the overthrow and banishment of the minister by whom it had been convened. In the fiscal concerns which absorbed the care and attention of others, Lafayette took comparatively little interest. His views were more comprehensive.

The assembly consisted of one hundred and thirty-seven persons, and divided itself into seven sections or bureaux, each presided by a prince of the blood. Lafayette was allotted to the division under the presidency of the Count d'Artois, the younger brother of the king, and since known as Charles the Tenth. The propositions made by Lafayette were—

1. The suppression of Letters de Cachet, and the abolition of all arbitrary imprisonment.

2. The establishment of religious toleration, and the restoration of the protestants to their civil rights.

3. The convocation of a national assembly, representing the people of France—personal liberty—religious liberty—and a representative assembly of the people. These were his demands.

The first and second of them produced, perhaps, at the time, no deep impression upon the assembly, nor upon the public. Arbitrary imprisonment, and the religious persecution of the protestants had become universally odious. They were worn-out instruments, even in the hands of those who wielded them. There was none to defend them.

But the demand for a national assembly started the prince at the head of the bureau. What! said the Count d'Artois, do you ask for the states general? Yes, Sir, was the answer of Lafayette, and for something yet better. You desire, then, replied the prince, that I should take in writing, and report to the king, that the motion to convoke the states general has been made by the Marquis de Lafayette? "Yes, Sir;" and the name of Lafayette was accordingly reported to the king.

The assembly of notables was dissolved—De Calonne was displaced and banished, and his successor undertook to raise the needed funds, by the authority of royal edicts. The war of litigation with the parliaments recommenced, which terminated only with a positive promise that the states general should be convoked.

From that time a total revolution of government in France was in progress. It has been a solemn, a sublime, often a most painful, and yet, in the contemplation of great results, a refreshing and cheering contemplation. I cannot follow it in its overwhelming multitude of details, even as connected with the life and character of Lafayette. A second assembly of notables succeeded the first; and then an assembly of the states general, first to deliberate in separate orders of clergy, nobility, and third estate; but, finally, constituting itself a national assembly, and forming a constitution of limited monarchy, with an hereditary royal executive, and a legislature in a single assembly representing the people.

Lafayette was a member of the states general first assembled. Their meeting was signalized by a struggle between the several orders of which they were composed, which resulted in breaking them all down into one national assembly.

The convocation of the states general had, in one respect, operated, in the progress of the French Revolution, like the Declaration of Independence in that of North America. It had changed the question in controversy. It was, on the part of the King of France, a concession that he had no lawful power to tax the people without their consent. The states general, therefore, met with this admission already conceded by the king. In the American conflict the British government never yielded the concession. They undertook to maintain their supposed right of arbitrary taxation by force; and then the people of the colonies renounced all community of government, not only with the king and parliament, but with the British nation. They reconstructed the fabric of government for themselves, and held the people of Britain as foreigners—friends in peace—enemies in war.

The concession by Louis the Sixteenth, implied in the convocation of the states general, was a virtual surrender of absolute power—an acknowledgment that, as exercised by himself and his predecessors, it had been usurped. It was, in substance, an abdication of his crown. There was no power which he exercised as King of France, the lawfulness of which was not contestable on the same principle which denied him the right of taxation. When the assembly of the states general met at Versailles,

in May, 1789, there was but a shadow of the royal authority left. They felt that the power of the nation was in their hands, and they were not sparing in the use of it. The representatives of the third estates, double in numbers to those of the clergy and the nobility, constituted themselves a national assembly, and, as a signal for the demolition of all privileged orders, refused to deliberate in separate chambers, and thus compelled the representatives of the clergy and nobility to merge their separate existence in the general mass of the popular representation.

Thus the edifice of society was to be reconstructed in France as it had been in America. The king made a feeble attempt to overawe the assembly, by calling regiments of troops to Versailles, and surrounding with them the hall of their meeting. But there was defection in the army itself, and even the person of the king soon ceased to be at his own disposal. On the 11th of July, 1789, in the midst of the fermentation which had succeeded the fall of the monarchy and while the assembly was surrounded by armed soldiers, Lafayette presented to them his Declaration of Rights—the first declaration of *human* rights ever proclaimed in Europe. It was adopted, and became the basis of that which the assembly promulgated with their constitution.

It was in this hemisphere, and in our own country, that all its principles had been imbibed. At the very moment when the Declaration was presented, the convulsive struggle between the expiring monarchy and the new-born but portentous anarchy of the Parisian populace was taking place. The royal palace and the hall of the assembly were surrounded with troops, and insurrection was kindling at Paris. In the midst of the popular commotion, a deputation of sixty members, with Lafayette at their head, was sent from the assembly to tranquilize the people of Paris, and that incident was the occasion of the institution of the National Guard throughout the realm, and of the appointment, with the approbation of the king, of Lafayette as their general commander-in-chief.

This event, without vacating his seat in the national assembly, connected him at once with the military and the popular movement of the revolution. The National Guard was the armed militia of the whole kingdom, embodied for the preservation of order, and the protection of

persons and property, as well as for the establishment of the liberties of the people. In his double capacity of commander-general of this force, and of a representative in the constituent assembly, his career, for a period of more than three years, was beset with the most imminent dangers, and with difficulties beyond all human power to surmount.

The ancient monarchy of France had crumbled into ruins. A national assembly, formed by an irregular representation of clergy, nobles, and third estate, after melting at the fire of a revolution into one body, had transformed itself into a constituent assembly representing the people, had assumed the exercise of all the powers of government extorted from the hands of the king, and undertaken to form a constitution for the French nation, founded at once upon the theory of human rights, and upon the preservation of a royal hereditary crown upon the head of Louis the Sixteenth. Lafayette sincerely believed that such a system would not be absolutely incompatible with the nature of things. An hereditary monarchy, surrounded by popular institutions, presented itself to his imagination as a practicable form of government; nor is it certain that even to his last days he ever abandoned this persuasion. The element of hereditary monarchy in this constitution was indeed not congenial to it. The prototype from which the whole fabric had been drawn, had no such element in its composition. A feeling of generosity, of compassion, of commiseration with the unfortunate prince then upon the throne, who had been his sovereign, and for his ill-fated family, mingled itself, perhaps unconsciously to himself, with his well-reasoned faith in the abstract principles of a republican creed. The total abolition of the monarchical feature undoubtedly belonged to his theory, but the family of Bourbon had still a strong hold on the affections of the French people; history had not made up a record favorable to the establishment of elective kings—a strong executive head was absolutely necessary to curb the impetuositities of the people of France; and the same doctrine which played upon the fancy, and crept upon the kind-hearted benevolence of Lafayette, was adopted by a large majority of the national assembly, sanctioned by the suffrages of its most intelligent, virtuous, and patriotic members, and was finally embodied in that royal democracy the result of

their labors, sent forth to the world, under the guaranty of numberless oaths, as the Constitution of France for all aftertime.

But, during the same period, after the first meeting of the states general, and while they were in actual conflict with the expiring energies of the crown, and with the exclusive privileges of the clergy and nobility, another portentous power had arisen, and entered with terrific activity into the controversies of the time. This was the power of popular insurrection, organized by voluntary associations of clubs, and impelled to action by the municipal authorities of the city of Paris.

The first movements of the people in the state of insurrection took place on the 12th of July, 1789, and issued in the destruction of the Bastille, and in the murder of its governor, and of several other persons, hung up at lamp-posts, or torn to pieces by the frenzied multitude, without form of trial, and without shadow of guilt.

The Bastille had long been odious as the place of confinement of persons arrested by arbitrary orders for offences against the government, and its destruction was hailed by most of the friends of liberty throughout the world as an act of patriotism and magnanimity on the part of the people. The brutal ferocity of the murders was overlooked or palliated in the glory of the achievement of razing to its foundations the execrated citadel of despotism. But, as the summary justice of insurrection can manifest itself only by destruction, the example once set became a precedent for a series of years for scenes so atrocious, and for butcheries so merciless and horrible, that memory revolts at the task of recalling them to the mind.

It would be impossible, within the compass of this discourse, to follow the details of the French Revolution to the final dethronement of Louis the Sixteenth, and the extinction of the constitutional monarchy of France, on the 10th of August, 1792. During that period, the two distinct powers were in continual operation—sometimes in concert with each other, sometimes at irreconcilable opposition. Of these powers, one was the people of France, represented by the Parisian populace in insurrection; the other was the people of France, represented successively by the constituent assembly, which formed the constitution of 1791, and by the

legislative assembly, elected to carry it into execution.

The movements of the insurgent power were occasionally convulsive and cruel, without mitigation or mercy. Guided by secret springs; prompted by vindictive and sanguinary ambition, directed by hands unseen to objects of individual aggrandizement, its agency fell like the thunderbolt, and swept like the whirlwind.

The proceedings of the assemblies were deliberative and intellectual. They began by grasping at the whole power of the monarchy, and they finished by sinking under the dictation of the Parisian populace. The constituent assembly numbered among its members many individuals of great ability, and of pure principles, but they were over-awed and domineered by that other representation of the people of France, which, through the instrumentality of the jacobin club, and the municipality of Paris, disconcerted the wisdom of the wise, and scattered to the winds the counsels of the prudent.

It was impossible that, under the perturbations of such a controlling power, a constitution suited to the character and circumstances of the nation should be formed.

Through the whole of this period, the part performed by Lafayette was without parallel in history. The annals of the human race exhibit no other instance of a position comparable for its unintermitted perils, its deep responsibilities, and its providential issues, with that which he occupied as commander-general of the national guard, and as a leading member of the constituent assembly. In the numerous insurrections of the people, he saved the lives of multitudes devoted as victims, and always at the most imminent hazard of his own. On the 5th and 6th of October, 1789, he saved the lives of Louis the Sixteenth, and of his queen. He escaped, time after time the daggers charged by princely conspiracy on one hand, and by popular frenzy on the other. He witnessed, too, without being able to prevent it, the butchery of Foulon before his eyes; and the reeking heart of Berthier, torn from his lifeless trunk, was held up in exulting triumph before him. On this occasion, and on another, he threw up his commission as commander of the national guards; but who could have succeeded him, even with equal power to restrain these volcanic excesses? At the earnest solicitation of those



who well knew that his place could never be supplied, he resumed and continued in the command until the solemn proclamation of the constitution, upon which he definitely laid it down, and retired to private life upon his estate in Auvergne.

As a member of the constituent assembly, it is not in the detailed organization of the government which they prepared, that *his* spirit and co-operation is to be traced. It is in the *principles* which he proposed and infused into the system. As, at the first assembly of notables, his voice had been raised for the abolition of arbitrary imprisonment, for the extinction of religious intolerance, and for the representation of the people, so, in the national assembly, besides the Declaration of Rights, which formed the basis of the constitution itself, he made or supported the motions for the establishment of trial by jury, for the gradual emancipation of slaves, for the freedom of the press, for the abolition of all titles of nobility, and for the declaration of equality of all the citizens, and the suppression of all the privileged orders, without exception of the princes of the royal family. Thus while as a legislator he was spreading the principles of universal liberty over the whole surface of the State, as commander-in-chief of the armed force of the nation he was controlling, repressing, and mitigating, as far as it could be effected by human power, the excesses of the people.

The constitution was at length proclaimed, and the constituent national assembly was dissolved. In advance of this event, the sublime spectacle of the Federation was exhibited on the 14th of July, 1790, the first anniversary of the destruction of the Bastile. There was an ingenious and fanciful association of ideas in the selection of that day. The Bastile was a state prison, a massive structure, which had stood four hundred years, every stone of which was saturated with sighs and tears, and echoed the groans of four centuries of oppression. It was the very type and emblem of the despotism which had so long weighed upon France. Demolished from its summit to its foundation at the first shout of freedom from the people, what day could be more appropriate than its anniversary for the day of solemn consecration of the new fabric of government, founded upon the rights of man?

I shall not describe the magnificent and me-

lancholy pageant of that day. It has been done by abler hands, and in a style which could only be weakened and diluted by repetition.\* The religious solemnity of the mass was performed by a prelate, then eminent among the members of the assembly and the dignitaries of the land; still eminent, after surviving the whole circle of subsequent revolutions. No longer a father of the church, but among the most distinguished laymen and most celebrated statesmen of France, *his* was the voice to invoke the blessing of heaven upon this new constitution for his liberated *country*; and he and Louis the Sixteenth, and Lafayette, and thirty thousand delegates from all the confederated national guards of the kingdom, in the presence of Almighty God, and of five hundred thousand of their countrymen, took the oath of fidelity to the nation, to the constitution, and all, save the monarch himself, to the king. His corresponding oath was, of fidelity to discharge the duties of his high office, and to the people.

Alas! and was it all false and hollow? had these oaths no more substance than the breath that ushered them to the winds? It is impossible to look back upon the short and turbulent existence of this royal democracy, to mark the frequent paroxysms of popular frenzy by which it was assailed, and the catastrophe by which it perished, and to believe that the vows of all who swore to support it were sincere. But as well might the sculptor of a block of marble, after exhausting his genius and his art in giving it a beautiful human form, call God to witness that it shall perform all the functions of animal life, as the constituent assembly of France could pledge the faith of its members that their royal democracy should work as a permanent organized form of government. The Declaration of Rights contained all the principles essential to freedom. The frame of government was radically and irreparably defective. The hereditary royal executive was itself an inconsistency with the Declaration of Rights. The legislative power, all concentrated in a single assembly, was an incongruity still more glaring. These were both departures from the system of organization which Lafayette had witnessed in the American constitutions: neither of them was approved by Lafayette. In deference to the prevailing opi-

\* In the address to the young men of Boston, by Edward Everett.



nions and prejudices of the times, he acquiesced in them, and he was destined to incur the most imminent hazards of his life, and to make the sacrifice of all that gives value to life itself, in faithful adherence to that constitution which he had sworn to support.

Shortly after his resignation, as commander-general of the national guards, the friends of liberty and order presented him as a candidate for election as mayor of Paris; but he had a competitor in the person of Pethion, more suited to the party, pursuing, with inexorable rancor the abolition of the monarchy and the destruction of the king; and, what may seem scarcely credible, the remnant of the party which still adhered to the king, the king himself, and above all, the queen, favored the election of the Jacobin, Pethion, in preference to that of Lafayette. They were, too fatally for themselves, successful.

From the first meeting of the legislative assembly, under the constitution of 1791, the destruction of the king and of the monarchy, and the establishment of a republic, by means of the popular passions and of popular violence, were the deliberate purposes of its leading members. The spirit with which the revolution had been pursued, from the time of the destruction of the Bastile, had caused the emigration of great numbers of the nobility and clergy; and, among them, of the two brothers of Louis the Sixteenth, and of several other princes of his blood. They had applied to all the other great monarchies of Europe for assistance to uphold or restore the crumbling monarchy of France. The French reformers themselves, in the heat of their political fanaticism avowed, without disguise, the design to revolutionize all Europe, and had emissaries in every country, openly or secretly preaching the doctrine of insurrection against all established governments. Louis the Sixteenth, and his queen, an Austrian princess, sister to the Emperor Leopold, were in secret negotiation with the Austrian government for the rescue of the king and royal family of France from the dangers with which they were so incessantly beset. In the Electorate of Treves, a part of the Germanic Empire, the emigrants from France were assembling, with indications of a design to enter France in hostile array, to effect a counter-revolution; and the brothers of the king, assuming a position at Coblenz, on the borders

of their country, were holding councils, the object of which was to march in arms to Paris, to release the king from captivity, and to restore the ancient monarchy to the dominion of absolute power.

The king, who even before his forced acceptance of the constitution of 1791, had made an unsuccessful attempt to escape from his palace prison, was in April, 1792, reduced to the humiliating necessity of declaring war against the very sovereigns who were arming their nations to rescue him from his revolted subjects. Three armies, each of fifty thousand men, were levied to meet the emergencies of this war, and were placed under the command of Luckner, Rochambeau, and Lafayette. As he passed through Paris to go and take the command of his army, he appeared before the legislative assembly, the president of which, in addressing him, said that the nation would oppose to their enemies the constitution and Lafayette.

But the enemies to the constitution were within the walls. At this distance of time, when most of the men, and many of the passions of those days, have passed away, when the French Revolution, and its results, should be regarded with the searching eye of philosophical speculation, as lessons of experience to after ages, may it even now be permitted to remark how much the virtues and the crimes of men, in times of political convulsion, are modified and characterized by the circumstances in which they are placed. The great actors of the tremendous scenes of revolution of those times were men educated in schools of high civilization, and in the humane and benevolent precepts of the Christian religion. A small portion of them were vicious and depraved; but the great majority were wound up to madness by that war of conflicting interests and absorbing passions, enkindled by a great convulsion of the social system. It has been said, by a great master of human nature,—

“In peace, there’s nothing so becomes a man  
As modest stillness and humility;  
But when the blast of war blows in your ears,  
Then imitate the action of the tiger.”

Too faithfully did the people of France, and the leaders of their factions, in that war of all the political elements, obey that injunction.

Who, that lived in that day, can remember? who, since born, can read, or bear to be told, the horrors of the 20th of June, the 10th of August, the 2d and 3d of September, 1792, of the 31st of May, 1793, and of a multitude of others, during which, in dreadful succession, the murderers of one day were the victims of the next, until that, when the insurgent populace themselves were shot down by thousands, in the very streets of Paris, by the military legions of the convention, and the rising fortune and genius of Napoleon Bonaparte? Who can remember, or read, or hear, of all this, without shuddering at the sight of man, his fellow-creature, in the drunkenness of political frenzy, degrading himself beneath the condition of the cannibal savage? beneath even the condition of the wild beast of the desert? and who, but with a feeling of deep mortification, can reflect, that the rational and immortal being, to the race of which he himself belongs, should, even in his most palmy state of intellectual cultivation, be capable of this self-transformation to brutality?

In this dissolution of all the moral elements which regulate the conduct of men in their social condition—in this monstrous, and scarcely conceivable spectacle of a king, at the head of a mighty nation, in secret league with the enemies against whom he has proclaimed himself at war, and of a legislature conspiring to destroy the king and constitution to which they have sworn allegiance and support, Lafayette alone is seen to preserve his fidelity to the king, to the constitution, and to his country,

“Unshaken, unseduced, unterrified,

His loyalty he kept, his love, his zeal.”

On the 16th of June, 1792, four days before the first violation of the palace of the Tuilleries by the populace of Paris, at the instigation of the jacobins, Lafayette, in a letter to the legislative assembly, had denounced the jacobin clubs, and called upon the assembly to suppress them. He afterwards repaired to Paris in person, presented himself at the bar of the assembly, repeated his denunciation of the clubs, and took measures for suppressing their meetings by force. He proposed also to the king himself to furnish him with means of withdrawing with his family to Compiègne, where he would have been out of the reach of that ferocious

and blood-thirsty multitude. The assembly, by a great majority of votes, sustained the principles of his letter, but the king declined his proffered assistance to enable him to withdraw from Paris; and of those upon whom he called to march with him, and shut up the hall where the jacobins held their meetings, not more than thirteen persons presented themselves at the appointed time.

He returned to his army, and became thenceforth the special object of jacobin resentment and revenge. On the 8th of August, on a preliminary measure to the intended insurrection of the 10th, the question was taken, after several days of debate, upon a formal motion that he should be put in accusation and tried. The last remnant of freedom in that assembly was then seen by the vote upon nominal appeal, or yeas and nays, in which four hundred and forty-six votes were for rejecting the charge, and only two hundred and twenty-four for sustaining it. Two days after, the Tuilleries were stormed by popular insurrection. The unfortunate king was compelled to seek refuge, with his family, in the hall of the legislative assembly, and escaped from being torn to pieces by an infuriated multitude, only to pass from his palace to the prison, in his way to the scaffold.

This revolution, thus accomplished, annihilated the constitution, the government, and the cause for which Lafayette had contended. The people of France, by their acquiescence, a great portion of them by direct approval, confirmed and sanctioned the abolition of the monarchy. The armies and their commanders took the same victorious side: not a show of resistance was made to the revolutionary torrent, not an arm was lifted to restore the fallen monarch to his throne, nor even to rescue or protect his person from the fury of his inexorable foes. Lafayette himself would have marched to Paris with his army for the defence of the constitution, but in this disposition he was not seconded by his troops. After ascertaining that the effort would be vain, and after arresting at Sedan the members of the deputation from the legislative assembly, sent, after their own subjugation, to arrest him, he determined, as the only expedient left him to save his honor and his principles, to withdraw both from the army and the country; to pass into a neutral territory, and thence into these United States, the

country of his early adoption and his fond partiality, where he was sure of finding a safe asylum, and of meeting a cordial welcome.

But his destiny had reserved him for other and severer trials. We have seen him struggling for the support of principles, against the violence of raging factions, and the fickleness of the multitude; we are now to behold him in the hands of the hereditary rulers of mankind, and to witness the nature of their tender mercies to him.

It was in the neutral territory of Liege that he, together with his companions, Latour Maubourg, Bureau de Puzy, and Alexandre Lameth, was taken by Austrians, and transferred to Prussian guards. Under the circumstances of the case, he could not, by the principles of the law of nations, be treated even as a prisoner of war. He was treated as a prisoner of state. Prisoners of state in the monarchies of Europe are always presumed guilty, and are treated as if entitled as little to mercy as to justice. Lafayette was immured in dungeons, first at Wesel, then at Magdeburg, and finally at Olmutz, in Moravia. By what right? By none known among men. By what authority? *That* has never been avowed. For what cause? None has ever been assigned. Taken by Austrian soldiers upon a neutral territory, handed over to Prussian jailors; and, when Frederick William of Prussia abandoned his Austrian ally, and made his separate peace with republican France, he retransferred his illustrious prisoner to the Austrians, from whom he had received him, that he might be deprived of the blessing of regaining his liberty, even from the hands of peace. Five years was the duration of this imprisonment, aggravated by every indignity that could make oppression bitter. That it was intended as imprisonment for life, was not only freely avowed, but significantly made known to him by his jailors; and while, with affected precaution, the means of terminating his sufferings by his own act were removed from him, the barbarity of ill-usage, of unwholesome food, and of a pestiferous atmosphere, was applied with inexorable rigor, as if to abridge the days which, at the same time, were rendered as far as possible insupportable to himself.

Neither the generous sympathies of the gallant soldier, General Fitzpatrick, in the British House of Commons, nor the personal sollicita-

tion of Washington, President of the United States, speaking with the voice of a grateful nation, nor the persuasive accents of domestic and conjugal affection, imploring the monarch of Austria for the release of Lafayette, could avail. The unsophisticated feeling of generous nature in the hearts of men, at this outrage upon justice and humanity, was manifested in another form. Two individuals, private citizens, one of the United States of America, Francis Huger, the other a native of the Electorate of Hanover, Doctor Erick Bollmann, undertook, at the imminent hazard of their lives, to supply means for his escape from prison, and their personal aid to its accomplishment. Their design was formed with great address, pursued with untiring perseverance, and executed with undaunted intrepidity. It was frustrated by accidents beyond the control of human sagacity.

To his persecutions, however, the hand of a wise and just Providence had, in its own time and in its own way, prepared a termination. The hands of the Emperor Francis, tied by mysterious and invisible bands against the indulgence of mercy to the tears of a more than heroic wife, were loosened by the more prevailing eloquence, or rather were severed by the conquering sword of Napoleon Bonaparte, acting under instructions from the executive directory, then swaying the destinies of France.

Lafayette and his fellow-sufferers were still under the sentence of proscription issued by the faction which had destroyed the constitution of 1791, and murdered the ill-fated Louis and his queen. But revolution had followed upon revolution since the downfall of the monarchy, on the 10th of August, 1792. The federative republicans of the Gironde had been butchered by the jacobin republicans of the mountain. The mountain had been subjugated by the municipality of Paris, and the sections of Paris, by a reorganization of parties in the national convention, and with aid from the armies. Brissot and his federal associates, Danton and his party, Robespierre and his subaltern demons, had successively perished, each by the measure applied to themselves which they had meted out to others; and as no experiment of political empiricism was to be omitted in the medley of the French Revolutions, the hereditary executive, with a single legislative assembly, was succeeded by a con-



stitution with a legislature in two branches, and a five-headed executive, eligible, annually one-fifth, by their concurrent votes, and bearing the name of a directory. This was the government at whose instance Lafayette was finally liberated from the dungeon of Olmutz.

But, while this directory were shaking to their deepest foundations all the monarchies of Europe; while they were stripping Austria, the most potent of them all, piecemeal of her territories; while they were imposing upon her the most humiliating conditions of peace, and bursting open her dungeons to restore their illustrious countrymen to the light of day and the blessing of personal freedom, they were themselves exploding by internal combustion, divided into two factions, each conspiring the destruction of the other. Lafayette received his freedom, only to see the two members of the directory, who had taken the warmest interest in effecting his liberation, outlawed and proscribed by their colleagues: one of them, Carnot, a fugitive from his country, lurking in banishment to escape pursuit; and the other, Barthelemy, deported with fifty members of the legislative assembly, without form of trial or even of legal process, to the pestilential climate of Guiana. All this was done with the approbation, expressed in the most unqualified terms, of Napoleon, and with co-operation of his army. Upon being informed of the success of this pride's purge, he wrote to the directory that he had with him one hundred thousand men, upon whom they might rely to cause to be respected all the measures that they should take to establish liberty upon solid foundations.

Two years afterwards another revolution, directly accomplished by Napoleon himself, demolished the directory, the constitution of the two councils, and the solid liberty, to the support of which the hundred thousand men had been pledged, and introduced another constitution with Bonaparte himself for its executive head, as the first of three consuls, for five years.

In the interval between these two revolutions, Lafayette resided for about two years, first in the Danish territory of Holstein, and afterwards at Utrecht, in the Batavian Republic. Neither of them had been effected by means or in a manner which could possibly meet his approbation. But the consular government commenced with broad professions of republican

principles, on the faith of which he returned to France, and for a series of years resided in privacy and retirement upon his estate of La Grange. Here, in the cultivation of his farm, and the enjoyment of domestic felicity, embittered only by the loss, in 1807, of that angel upon earth, the partner of all the vicissitudes of his life, he employed his time, and witnessed the upward flight and downward fall of the soldier and sport of fortune, Napoleon Bonaparte. He had soon perceived the hollowness of the consular professions of pure republican principles, and withheld himself from all participation in the government. In 1802, he was elected a member of the general council of the department of Upper Loire, and in declining the appointment, took occasion to present a review of his preceding life, and a pledge of his perseverance in the principles which he had previously sustained. "Far," said he, "from the scene of public affairs, and devoting myself at last to the repose of private life, my ardent wishes are, that external peace should soon prove the fruit of those miracles of glory which are even now surpassing the prodigies of the preceding campaigns, and that internal peace should be consolidated upon the essential and invariable foundations of true liberty. Happy that twenty-three years of vicissitudes in my fortune, and of constancy to my principles, authorize me to repeat, that if a nation, to recover its rights, needs only the will, they can only be preserved by inflexible fidelity to its obligations."

When the first consulate for five years was invented as one of the steps of the ladder of Napoleon's ambition, he suffered Sieyes, the member of the directory whom he had used as an instrument for casting off that worse than worthless institution, to prepare another constitution, of which he took as much as suited his purpose, and consigned the rest to oblivion. One of the wheels of this new political engine was a conservative senate, forming the peerage to sustain the executive head. This body it was the interest and the policy of Napoleon to conciliate, and he filled it with men who, through all the previous stages of the revolution, had acquired and maintained the highest respectability of character. Lafayette was urged with great earnestness, by Napoleon himself, to take a seat in this senate; but, after several conferences with the first consul, in which he



ascertained the extent of his designs, he peremptorily declined. His answer to the minister of war tempered his refusal with a generous and delicate compliment, alluding at the same time to the position which the consistency of his character made it his duty to occupy. To the first consul himself, in terms equally candid and explicit, he said, "that, from the direction which public affairs were taking, what he already saw, and what it was easy to foresee, it did not seem suitable to his character to enter into an order of things contrary to his principles, and in which he would have to contend without success, as without public utility, against a man to whom he was indebted for great obligations."

Not long afterwards, when all republican principle was so utterly prostrated that he was summoned to vote on the question whether the citizen Napoleon Bonaparte should be consul for life, Lafayette added to his vote the following comment: "I cannot vote for such a magistracy until the public liberty shall have been sufficiently guarantied; and in that event I vote for Napoleon Bonaparte."

He wrote at the same time to the first consul a letter explanatory of his vote, which no republican will now read without recognising the image of inordinate and triumphant ambition cowering under the rebuke of disinterested virtue.

"The 18th of Brumaire, [said this letter,] saved France; and I felt myself recalled by the liberal professions to which you had attached your honor. Since then, we have seen in the consular power that reparatory dictatorship which, under the auspices of your genius, has achieved so much; *yet not so much as will be the restoration of liberty.* It is impossible that you, general, the first of that order of men who, to compare and seat themselves, take in the compass of all ages, that *you* should wish such a revolution—so many victories, so much blood, so many calamities and prodigies, should have for the world and for you no other result than an arbitrary government. The French people have too well known their rights ultimately to forget them; but perhaps they are now better prepared, than in the time of their effervescence, to recover them usefully; and you, by the force of your character, and of the public confidence, by the superiority of your talents, of your position, of your fortune, may, by the re-estab-

lishment of liberty, surmount every danger, and relieve every anxiety. I have, then, no other than patriotic and personal motives for wishing you this last addition to your glory—a permanent magistracy; but it is due to the principles, the engagements, and the actions of my whole life, to wait, before giving my vote, until liberty shall have been settled upon foundations worthy of the nation and of you. I hope, general, that you will here find, as heretofore, that with the perseverance of my political opinions are united sincere good wishes personally to you, and a profound sentiment of my obligations to you."

The writer of this letter, and he to whom it was addressed, have, each in his appropriate sphere, been instruments of transcendent power, in the hands of Providence, to shape the ends of its wisdom in the wonderful story of the French Revolution. In contemplating the part which each of them had acted upon that great theatre of human destiny, *before* the date of the letter, how strange was at that moment the relative position of the two individuals to each other, and to the world! Lafayette was the founder of the great movement then in progress for the establishment of freedom in France, and in the European world; but his agency had been all intellectual and moral. He had asserted and proclaimed the principles. He had never violated, never betrayed them. Napoleon, a military adventurer, had vaped in proclamations, and had the froth of jacobinism upon his lips; but his soul was at the point of his sword. The revolution was to Lafayette the cause of human kind; to Napoleon it was a mere ladder of ambition.

Yet, at the time when this letter was written, Lafayette, after a series of immense sacrifices and unparalleled sufferings, was a private citizen, called to account to the world for declining to vote for placing Napoleon at the head of the French nation, with arbitrary and indefinite power for life; and Napoleon, amid professions of unbounded devotion to *liberty*, was, in the face of mankind, ascending the steps of an hereditary imperial and royal throne. Such was their relative position *then*; what is it now? Has history a lesson for mankind more instructive than the contrast and the parallel of their fortunes and their fate? Time and chance, and the finger of Providence, which, in every deviation from the path of jus-

tice, reserves or opens to itself an avenue of return, has brought each of these mighty men to a close of life, congenial to the character with which he travelled over its scenes. The consul for life, the hereditary emperor and king, expires a captive on a barren rock in the wilderness of a distant ocean—separated from his imperial wife—separated from his son, who survives him only to pine away his existence, and die at the moment of manhood, in the condition of an Austrian prince. The apostle of liberty survives, again to come forward, the ever-consistent champion of her cause, and finally to close his career in peace, a republican, without reproach in death, as he had been without fear throughout life.

But Napoleon was to be the artificer of his own fortunes, prosperous and adverse. He was rising by the sword; by the sword he was destined to fall. The councils of wisdom and of virtue fell forceless upon his ear, or sunk into his heart only to kindle resentment and hatred. He sought no further personal intercourse with Lafayette; and denied common justice to his son, who had entered and distinguished himself in the army of Italy, and from whom he withheld the promotion justly due to his services.

The career of glory, of fame, and of power, of which the consulate for life was but the first step, was of ten years' continuance, till it had reached its zenith; till the astonished eyes of mankind beheld the charity scholar of Brienne, emperor, king, and protector of the confederation of the Rhine, banqueting at Dresden, surrounded by a circle of tributary crowned heads, among whom was seen that very Francis of Austria, the keeper, in his Castle of Olmutz, of the republican Lafayette. And upon that day of the banqueting at Dresden, the star of Napoleon culminated from the equator. Thenceforward it was to descend with motion far more rapid than when rising, till it sunk in endless night. Through that long period, Lafayette remained in retirement at La Grange. Silent amidst the deafening shouts of victory from Marengo, and Jena, and Austerlitz, and Friedland, and Wagram and Borodino—silent at the conflagration of Moscow; at the passage of the Beresina; at the irretrievable discomfiture of Leipzig; at the capitulation at the gates of Paris, and at the first restoration of the Bourbons, under the auspices of the inveterate enemies of France—as little could Lafayette

participate in the measures of that restoration, as in the usurpations of Napoleon. Louis the Eighteenth was *quartered* upon the French nation as the soldiers of the victorious armies were quartered upon the inhabitants of Paris. Yet Louis the Eighteenth, who held his crown as the gift of the conquerors of France, the most humiliating of the conditions imposed upon the vanquished nation, affected to hold it by divine right, and to grant, as a special favor, a *charter*, or constitution, founded on the avowed principle that all the liberties of the nation were no more than gratuitous donations of the king.

These pretensions, with a corresponding course of policy pursued by the reinstated government of the Bourbons, and the disregard of the national feelings and interests of France, with which Europe was remodelled at the congress of Vienna, opened the way for the return of Napoleon from Elba, within a year from the time when he had been relegated there. He landed as a solitary adventurer, and the nation rallied around him with rapture. He came with promises to the nation of freedom as well as of independence. The allies of Vienna proclaimed against him a war of extermination, and re-invaded France with armies exceeding in numbers a million of men. Lafayette had been courted by Napoleon upon his return. He was again urged to take his seat in the House of Peers, but peremptorily declined, from aversion to its hereditary character. He had refused to resume his title of nobility, and protested against the constitution of the empire, and the additional act entailing the imperial hereditary crown upon the family of Napoleon. But he offered himself as a candidate for election as a member of the popular representative chamber of the Legislature, and was unanimously chosen by the electoral college of his department to that station.

The battle of Waterloo was the last desperate struggle of Napoleon to recover his fallen fortunes, and its issue fixed his destiny for ever. He escaped almost alone from the field, and returned a fugitive to Paris, projecting to dissolve by armed force the legislative assembly, and, assuming a dictatorial power, to levy a new army, and try the desperate chances of another battle. This purpose was defeated by the energy and promptitude of Lafayette. At his instance the assembly adopted three resolu-

tions, one of which declared them in permanent session, and denounced any attempt to dissolve them as a crime of high treason.

After a feeble and fruitless attempt of Napoleon, through his brother Lucien, to obtain from the assembly itself a temporary dictatorial power, he abdicated the Imperial Crown in favor of his infant son; but his abdication could not relieve France from the deplorable condition to which he had reduced her. France, from the day of the battle of Waterloo, was at the mercy of the allied monarchs; and, as the last act of their revenge, they gave her again the Bourbons. France was constrained to receive them. It was at the point of the bayonet, and resistance was of no avail. The legislative assembly appointed a provisional council of government, and commissioners, of whom Lafayette was one, to negotiate with the allied armies then rapidly advancing upon Paris.

The allies manifested no disposition to negotiate. They closed the doors of their hall upon the representatives of the people of France. They reseatd Louis the Eighteenth upon his throne. Against these measures Lafayette and the members of the assembly had no means of resistance left, save a fearless protest, to be remembered when the day of freedom should return.

From the time of this second restoration until his death, Lafayette, who had declined accepting a seat in the hereditary chamber of peers, and inflexibly refused to resume his title of nobility, though the charter of Louis the Eighteenth had restored them all, was almost constantly a member of the chamber of deputies, the popular branch of the legislature. More than once, however, the influence of the court was successful in defeating his election. At one of these intervals, he employed the leisure afforded him in revisiting the United States.

Forty years had elapsed since he had visited and taken leave of them, at the close of the revolutionary war. The greater part of the generation for and with whom he had fought his first fields, had passed away. Of the two millions of souls to whose rescue from oppression he had crossed the ocean in 1777, not one in ten survived. But their places were supplied by more than five times their numbers, their descendants and successors. The sentiment of gratitude and affection for Lafayette, far from declining with the lapse of time, quickened in spirit as it advanced in years, and seemed to

multiply with the increasing numbers of the people. The nation had never ceased to sympathize with his fortunes, and in every vicissitude of his life, had manifested the deepest interest in his welfare. He had occasionally expressed his intention to visit once more the scene of his early achievements, and the country which had requited his services by a just estimate of their value. In February, 1824, a solemn legislative act, unanimously passed by both houses of congress, and approved by the President of the United States, charged the chief magistrate of the nation with the duty of communicating to him the assurances of grateful and affectionate attachment still cherished for him by the government and people of the United States, and of tendering to him a national ship, with suitable accommodation, for his conveyance to this country.

Ten years have passed away since the occurrence of that event. Since then, the increase of population within the borders of our Union exceeds, in numbers, the whole mass of that infant community to whose liberties he had devoted, in early youth, his life and fortune. His companions and fellow-soldiers of the war of Independence, of whom a scanty remnant still existed to join in the universal shout of welcome with which he landed upon our shores, have been since, in the ordinary course of nature, dropping away: pass but a few short years more, and not an individual of that generation with which he toiled and bled in the cause of human kind, upon his first appearance on the field of human action, will be left. The gallant officer, and distinguished representative of the people, at whose motion, upon this floor, the invitation of the nation was given—the chief magistrate by whom, in compliance with the will of the legislature, it was tendered—the surviving Presidents of the United States, and their venerable compeer signers of the Declaration of Independence, who received him to the arms of private friendship, while mingling their voices in the chorus of public exultation and joy, are no longer here to shed the tear of sorrow upon his departure from this earthly scene. They all preceded him in the translation to another, and, we trust, a happier world. The active, energetic manhood of the nation, of whose infancy he had been the protector and benefactor, and who, by the protracted festivities of more than a year of jubilee, manifested to him their sense



of the obligations for which they were indebted to him, are already descending into the vale of years. The children of the public schools, who thronged in double files to pass in review before him to catch a glimpse of his countenance, and a smile from his eye, are now among the men and women of the land, rearing another generation to envy their parents the joy which they can never share, of having seen and contributed to the glorious and triumphant reception of Lafayette.

Upon his return to France, Lafayette was received with a welcome by his countrymen scarcely less enthusiastic than that with which he had been greeted in this country. From his landing at Havre till his arrival at his residence at La Grange, it was again one triumphal march, rendered but the more striking by the interruptions and obstacles of an envious and jealous government. Threats were not even spared of arresting him as a criminal, and holding him responsible for the spontaneous and irrepressible feelings manifested by the people in his favor. He was, very soon after his return, again elected a member of the chamber of deputies, and thenceforward, in that honorable and independent station, was the soul of that steadfast and inflexible party which never ceased to defend, and was ultimately destined to vindicate the liberties of France.

The government of the Bourbons, from the time of their restoration, was a perpetual struggle to return to the saturnian times of absolute power. For *them* the sun and moon had stood still, not, as in the miracle of ancient story, for about a whole day, but for more than a whole century. Reseated upon their thrones, not, as the Stuarts had been in the seventeenth century, by the voluntary act of the same people which had expelled them, but by the arms of foreign kings and hostile armies, instead of aiming, by the liberality of their government, and by improving the condition of their people, to make them forget the humiliation of the yoke imposed upon them, they labored with unyielding tenacity to make it more galling. They disarmed the national guards; they cramped and crippled the right of suffrage in elections; they perverted and travestied the institution of juries; they fettered the freedom of the press, and in their external policy lent themselves, willing instruments to crush the liberties of Spain and Italy. The spirit of the nation was curbed, but not

subdued. The principles of freedom proclaimed in the Declaration of Rights of 1789, had taken too deep root to be extirpated. Charles the Tenth, by a gradual introduction into his councils of the most inveterate adherents to the anti-revolutionary government, was preparing the way for the annihilation of the charter and of the legislative representation of the people. In proportion as this plan approached to its maturity, the resistance of the nation to its accomplishment acquired consistency and organization. The time had been, when, by the restrictions upon the right of suffrage, and the control of the press, and even of the freedom of debate in the legislature, the opposition in the chamber of deputies had dwindled down to not more than thirty members. But, under a rapid succession of incompetent and unpopular administrations, the majority of the house of deputies had passed from the side of the court to that of the people. In August, 1829, the king, confiding in his imaginary strength, reorganized his ministry by the appointment of men whose reputation was itself a pledge of the violent and desperate designs in contemplation. At the first meeting of the legislative assembly, an address to the king, signed by two hundred and twenty-one out of four hundred members, declared to him, in respectful terms, that a concurrence of sentiments between his ministers and the nation was indispensable to the happiness of the people under his government, and that this concurrence did not exist. He replied that his determination was immovable, and dissolved the assembly. A new election was held; and so odious throughout the nation were the measures of the court, that, of the two hundred and twenty-one members who had signed the address against the ministers, more than two hundred were re-elected. The opposition had also gained an accession of numbers in the remaining part of the deputations, and it was apparent that, upon the meeting of the assembly, the court party could not be sustained.

At this crisis, Charles the Tenth, as if resolved to leave himself not the shadow of a pretext to complain of his expulsion from the throne, in defiance of the charter, to the observance of which he had solemnly sworn, issued at one and the same time, four ordinances—the first of which suspended the liberty of the press, and prohibited the publication



of all the daily newspapers and other periodical journals, but by license, revocable at pleasure, and renewable every three months; the second annulled the election of deputies, which had just taken place; the third changed the mode of election prescribed by law, and reduced nearly by one-half the numbers of the House of Deputies to be elected; and the fourth commanded the new elections to be held, and fixed a day for the meeting of the assembly to be so constituted.

These ordinances were the immediate occasion of the last revolution of the three days, terminating in the final expulsion of Charles the Tenth from the throne, and of himself and his family from the territory of France. This was effected by an insurrection of the people of Paris, which burst forth, by spontaneous and unpremeditated movement, on the very day of the promulgation of the four ordinances. The first of these, the suppression of all the daily newspapers, seemed as if studiously devised to provoke instantaneous resistance, and the conflict of physical force. Had Charles the Tenth issued a decree to shut up all the bakehouses of Paris, it could not have been more fatal to his authority. The conductors of the proscribed journals, by mutual engagement among themselves, determined to consider the ordinance as unlawful, null and void; and this was to all classes of the people the signal of resistance. The publishers of two of the journals, summoned immediately before the judicial tribunal, were justified in their resistance by the sentence of the court, pronouncing the ordinance null and void. A marshal of France receives the commands of the king to disperse by force of arms the population of Paris; but the spontaneous resurrection of the national guard organizes at once an army to defend the liberties of the nation. Lafayette is again called from his retreat at La Grange, and by the unanimous voice of the people, confirmed by such deputies of the legislative assembly as were able to meet for common consultation at that trying emergency, is again placed at the head of the national guard as their commander-in-chief. He assumed the command on the second day of the conflict, and on the third Charles the Tenth had ceased to reign. He formally abdicated the crown, and his son, the Duke d'Angoulême, renounced his pretensions to the succession. But, humble imitators of Napoleon,

even in submitting to their own degradation, they clung to the last gasp of hereditary sway, by transmitting all their claim of dominion to the orphan child of the Duke de Berri.

At an early stage of the revolution of 1789, Lafayette had declared it as a principle that insurrection against tyrants was the most sacred of duties. He had borrowed this sentiment perhaps from the motto of Jefferson—"Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God." The principle itself is as sound as its enunciation is daring. Like all general maxims, it is susceptible of very dangerous abuses: the test of its truth is exclusively in the correctness of its application. As forming a part of the political creed of Lafayette, it has been severely criticised; nor can it be denied that in the experience of the French revolutions, the cases in which popular insurrection has been resorted to, for the extinction of existing authority, have been so frequent, so unjustifiable in their causes, so atrocious in their execution, so destructive to liberty in their consequences, that the friends of freedom, who know that she can exist only under the supremacy of the law, have sometimes felt themselves constrained to shrink from the development of abstract truth, in the dread of the danger with which she is surrounded.

In the revolution of the three days of 1830, it was the steady, calm, but inflexible adherence of Lafayette to this maxim which decided the fate of the Bourbons. After the struggles of the people had commenced, and even while liberty and power were grappling with each other for life or death, the deputies elect to the legislative assembly, then at Paris, held several meetings at the house of their colleague Lafitte, and elsewhere, at which the question of resistance against the ordinances was warmly debated, and aversion to that resistance by force was the sentiment predominant in the minds of a majority of the members. The hearts of some of the most ardent patriots quailed within them at the thought of another overthrow of the monarchy. All the horrible recollections of the reign of terror, the massacre of the prisons in September, the butcheries of the guillotine from year to year, the headless trunks of Brissot, and Danton, and Robespierre, and last, not least, the iron crown and sceptre of Napoleon himself, rose in hideous succession before them, and haunted their imaginations. They

detested the ordinances, but hoped that by negotiation and remonstrance with the recreant king, it might yet be possible to obtain the revocation of them, and the substitution of a more liberal ministry. This deliberation was not concluded till Lafayette appeared among them. From that moment the die was cast. They had till then no military leader. Louis Philippe, of Orleans, had not then been seen among them.

In all the changes of government in France, from the first assembly of notables to that day, there never had been an act of authority presenting a case for the fair and just application of the *duty* of resistance against oppression, so clear, so unquestionable, so flagrant as this. The violations of the charter were so gross and palpable, that the most determined royalist could not deny them. The mask had been laid aside. The sword of despotism had been drawn, and the scabbard cast away. A king openly foresworn, had forfeited every claim to allegiance; and the only resource of the nation against him was resistance by force. This was the opinion of Lafayette, and he declared himself ready to take the command of the national guard, should the wish of the people, already declared thus to place him at the head of this spontaneous movement, be confirmed by his colleagues of the legislative assembly. The appointment was accordingly conferred upon him, and the second day afterwards Charles the Tenth and his family were fugitives to a foreign land.

France was without a government. She might then have constituted herself a republic; and such was, undoubtedly, the aspiration of a very large portion of her population. But with another, and yet larger portion of her people, the name of republic was identified with the memory of Robespierre. It was held in execration; there was imminent danger, if not absolute certainty, that the attempt to organize a republic would have been the signal for a new civil war. The name of a republic, too, was hateful to all the neighbors of France; to the confederacy of emperors and kings, which had twice replaced the Bourbons upon the throne, and who might be propitiated under the disappointment and mortification of the result, by the retention of the name of king, and the substitution of the semblance of a Bourbon for the reality.

The people of France, like the Cardinal de Retz, more than two centuries before, *wanted* a descendant from Henry the Fourth, who could speak the language of the Parisian populace, and who had known what it was to be a plebeian. They found him in the person of Louis Philippe, of Orleans. Lafayette himself was compelled to compromise with his principles, purely and simply republican, and to accept him, first as lieutenant-general of the kingdom, and then as hereditary king. There was, perhaps, in this determination, besides the motives which operated upon others, a consideration of disinterested delicacy, which could be applicable only to himself. If the republic should be proclaimed, he knew that the chief magistracy could be delegated only to himself. It must have been a chief magistracy for life, which, at his age, could only have been for a short term of years. Independent of the extreme dangers and difficulties to himself, to his family, and to his country, in which the position which he would have occupied might have involved them, the inquiry could not escape his forecast, who, upon his demise, could be his successor? and what must be the position occupied by him? If, at that moment, he had but spoken the word, he might have closed his career with a crown upon his head, and with a withering blast upon his name to the end of time.

With the Duke of Orleans himself, he used no concealment or disguise. When the crown was offered to that prince, and he looked to Lafayette for consultation, "you know (said he) that I am of the *American school*, and partial to the constitution of the United States." So, it seems, was Louis Philippe. "I think with you," said he. "It is impossible to pass two years in the United States, without being convinced that their government is the best in the world. But do you think it suited to our present circumstances and condition?" No, replied Lafayette. They require a monarchy surrounded by popular institutions. So thought, also, Louis Philippe; and he accepted the crown under the conditions upon which it was tendered to him.

Lafayette retained the command of the national guard so long as it was essential to the settlement of the new order of things, on the basis of order and of freedom; so long as it was essential to control the stormy and excited passions of the Parisian people; so long as

was necessary to save the ministers of the guilty but fallen monarch from the rash and revengeful resentments of their conquerors. When this was accomplished, and the people had been preserved from the calamity of shedding in peace the blood of war, he once more resigned his command, retired in privacy to La Grange, and resumed his post as a deputy in the legislative assembly, which he continued to hold till the close of life.

His station there was still at the head of the phalanx, supporters of liberal principles and of constitutional freedom. In Spain, in Portugal, in Italy, and above all in Poland, the cause of liberty has been struggling against the hand of power, and, to the last hour of his life, they found in Lafayette a never-failing friend and patron.

In his last illness, the standing which he held in the hearts of mankind was attested by the formal resolution of the House of Deputies, met to make inquiries concerning his condition; and dying, as he did, full of years and of glory, never, in the history of mankind, has a private individual departed more universally lamented by the whole generation of men whom he has left behind.

Such, *Legislators of the North American Confederated Union*, was the life of GILBERT MOTTIER DE LAFAYETTE, and the record of his life is the delineation of his character. Consider him as one human being of one thousand millions, his cotemporaries on the surface of the terraqueous globe. Among that thousand millions seek for an object of comparison with him; assume for the standard of comparison all the virtues which exalt the character of man above that of the brute creation; take the ideal man, little lower than the angels; mark the qualities of the mind and heart which entitle him to this station of pre-eminence in the scale of created beings, and inquire who, that lived in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries of the Christian era, combined in himself so many of those qualities, so little alloyed with those which belong to that earthly vesture of decay in which the immortal spirit is enclosed, as Lafayette.

Pronounce him one of the first men of his age, and you have not yet done him justice. Try him by that test to which he sought in vain to stimulate the vulgar and selfish spirit of Napoleon; class him among the men who, to

compare and seat themselves, must take in the compass of *all ages*; turn back your eyes upon the records of time; summon from the creation of the world to this day the mighty dead of every age and every clime—and where, among the race of merely mortal men, shall one be found, who, as the benefactor of his kind, shall claim to take precedence of Lafayette?

There have doubtless been, in all ages, men, whose discoveries or inventions, in the world of matter or of mind, have opened new avenues to the dominion of man over the material creation; have increased his means or his faculties of enjoyment; have raised him in nearer approximation to that higher and happier condition, the object of his hopes and aspirations in his present state of existence.

Lafayette discovered no new principle of politics or of morals. He invented nothing in science. He disclosed no new phenomenon in the laws of nature. Born and educated in the highest order of feudal nobility, under the most absolute monarchy of Europe, in possession of an affluent fortune, and master of himself and of all his capabilities at the moment of attaining manhood, the principle of republican justice and of social equality took possession of his heart and mind, as if by inspiration from above. He devoted himself, his life, his fortune, his hereditary honors, his towering ambition, his splendid hopes, all to the cause of liberty. He came to another hemisphere to defend her. He became one of the most effective champions of our Independence; but, that once achieved, he returned to his own country, and thenceforward took no part in the controversies which have divided us. In the events of our revolution, and in the forms of policy which we have adopted for the establishment and perpetuation of our freedom, Lafayette found the most perfect form of government. He wished to add nothing to it. *He would gladly have abstracted nothing from it.* Instead of the imaginary republic of Plato, or the Utopia of Sir Thomas More, he took a practical existing model, in actual operation here, and never attempted or wished more than to apply it faithfully to his own country.

It was not given to Moses to enter the promised land; but he saw it from the summit of Pisgah. It was not given to Lafayette to witness the consummation of his wishes in the establishment of a republic, and the extinction

of all hereditary rule in France. His principles were in advance of the age and hemisphere in which he lived. A Bourbon still reigns on the throne of France, and it is not for us to scrutinize the title by which he reigns. The principles of elective and hereditary power, blended in reluctant union in his person, like the red and white roses of York and Lancaster, may postpone to aftertime the last conflict to which they must ultimately come. The life of the patriarch was not long enough for the development of his whole political system. Its final accomplishment is in the womb of time.

The anticipation of this event is the more certain, from the consideration that all the principles for which Lafayette contended were practical. He never indulged himself in wild and fanciful speculations. The principle of hereditary power, was, in his opinion, the bane of all republican liberty in Europe. Unable to extinguish it in the revolution of 1830, so far as concerned the chief magistracy of the nation, Lafayette had the satisfaction of seeing it abolished with reference to the peerage. An hereditary crown, stript of the support which it may derive from an hereditary peerage, however compatible with Asiatic despotism, is an anomaly in the history of the Christian world, and in the theory of free government. There is no argument producible against the existence of an hereditary peerage, but applies with aggravated weight against the transmission, from sire to son, of an hereditary crown. The prejudices and passions of the people of France rejected the principle of inherited power, in every station of public trust, excepting the first and highest of them all; but there they clung to it, as did the Israelites of old to the savory deities of Egypt.

This is not the time or the place for a disquisition upon the comparative merits, as a system

of government, of a republic, and a monarchy surrounded by republican institutions. Upon this subject there is among us no diversity of opinion; and if it should take the people of France another half century of internal and external war, of dazzling and delusive glories, of unparalleled triumphs, humiliating reverses, and bitter disappointments, to settle it to their satisfaction, the ultimate result can only bring them to the point where we have stood from the day of the Declaration of Independence—to the point where Lafayette would have brought them, and to which he looked as a consummation devoutly to be wished.

Then, too, and then only, will be the time when the character of Lafayette will be appreciated at its true value throughout the civilized world. When the principle of hereditary dominion shall be extinguished in all the institutions of France; when government shall no longer be considered as property transmissible from sire to son, but as a trust committed for a limited time, and then to return to the people whence it came; as a burdensome duty to be discharged, and not as a reward to be abused; when a claim, any claim, to political power by *inheritance* shall, in the estimation of the whole French people, be held as it now is by the whole people of the North American Union—then will be the time for contemplating the character of Lafayette, not merely in the events of his life, but in the full development of his intellectual conceptions, of his fervent aspirations, of the labors and perils and sacrifices of his long and eventful career upon earth; and thenceforward, till the hour when the trump of the archangel shall sound to announce that time shall be no more, the name of Lafayette shall stand enrolled upon the annals of our race, high on the list of the pure and disinterested benefactors of mankind.



# THE LIFE AND CHARACTER

OF

## JAMES MONROE.\*

AMONG the peculiarities affecting the condition of human existence, in a community formed within the period allotted to the life of man, is the state of being exclusively belonging to the individuals who assisted in the formation of that community. Three thousand years have elapsed since the Monarch of Israel, who, from that time, has borne the reputation of the wisest of men, declared that there was no *new* thing under the sun. And then, as now, the assertion, confined to the operations of nature, to the instincts of animal life, to the primary purposes, and innate passions of human kind, was, and is, strictly true. Of all the illustrations of the sentiment given by him, the course is now as it was then. One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh. To the superficial observation of the human eye, the Sun still ariseth and goeth down; the wind whirlleth about continually; all rivers run into the sea, which yet is not full; and all things are full of labor, which man cannot utter: yet, although the thing that hath been is that which shall be, and that which *is* done is that which *shall be* done,—still the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing: and this affords the solution to all the rest. The aspirations of man to a better condition than that which he enjoys, are at once the pledges of his immortality, and the privileges of his existence upon earth; they combine for his enjoyment the still freshening charms of novelty with the immutable laws of creation, and intertwine the ever-varying felicities of his condition with the unchangeable monotony of nature.

Thus, a thousand years after Solomon had ceased to exist upon earth, when his kingdom had been extinguished, and his nation carried

into captivity, there arose among his own descendants, a Redeemer of the human race from the thralldom of sin; the Mediator of a new covenant between God and man. From that time, though all remained unchanged in the phenomena of creation, all was new in the condition of human life. In the rise and fall of successive empires, other novelties succeed each other from age to age. New planets are discovered in the heavens, and new continents are revealed upon earth. New pursuits are opened to industry; new comforts to enjoyment; new prospects to hope. The secrets of the physical and intellectual world are gradually disclosed; the powers of man are from time to time enlarged:—but the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.—The tendency of the magnet to the Pole, and its application to the purposes of navigation; the composition of gunpowder, and its application to the purposes of war; the invention of printing, and its application to all the purposes of man, in peace and war,—to the wants of the body, and the expansion of the mind,—the gift as it were, of a new earth to replenish and subdue, by the disclosure of a new hemisphere, to the enterprise and capacities of man; all these things are new in the records of the human species. Each of these things diverted into a new channel the current of human affairs, and furnished for the lord of the creation a new system of occupations in his progress from the cradle to the grave.

But of all the changes effected, and all the novelties introduced into the condition of human beings, since the promulgation of the gospel of Christ, none has been more considerable than that, the developement of which began with the severance of the British colonies in North America from the parent-stock. The imme-

\*Delivered before the Corporation of Boston, 1831.

diate collision of rights, interests, and passions, which produced the conflict between the parties, and ended in sundering the two portions of the empire engaged, occupied and absorbed the agency and the powers of the actors on that memorable theatre. An English poet has declared it praise enough to fill the ambition of a common man, that he was the countryman of Wolfe, and spoke the language of Chatham. The colonists, who achieved the independence of North America, were the countrymen of Wolfe, and Chatham's language was their mother-tongue. But of what avail for praise would this have been to them, had they not possessed souls, inspired with the same principles, and hearts endowed with higher energies than those which conducted those illustrious names to the pinnacle of glory.—Never would the object of the North American Revolution have been accomplished but by men, in whose bosoms the love of liberty had been implanted from their birth, and imbibed from the maternal breast.

Considered in itself, the independence of our country was only the splitting up of one civilized nation into two—caused by usurpation; consummated by war. As such, it constituted one great element in the history of civilized man during its continuance; but that was short and transient. From the Stamp Act to the definitive Treaty of Peace, concluded at Paris, on the third of September, 1783, a term of less than twenty years intervened,—a term scarcely sufficient for the action of one of the dramas of Shakspeare. It was not even equal to the duration of one age of man. We have already lived since the close of that momentous struggle nearly thrice the extent of time, in which it passed through all its stages, and there are yet among the living those whose birth preceded even that of the questions upon which hinged our independent existence as a nation.

Among these was the distinguished person, whose earthly career terminated on the fifty-fifth Anniversary of our National Independence.

JAMES MONROE was born in September, 1759, in the County of Westmoreland, in the then Colony of Virginia; and at the time of the Declaration of Independence, was in the process of completing his education at the college of William and Mary. He was then seventeen years of age, and at the first formation of the American army entered it as a cadet. Had

he been born ten years before, it can scarcely be doubted that he would have been one of the members of the first Congress, and that his name would have gone down to posterity among those of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. Among the blessings conferred by a beneficent Providence upon this country in the series of events which composed that Revolution, was its influence in the formation of individual and of national character. The controversy which preceded the Revolutionary war, necessarily formed by a practical education the race of statesmen, by whom it was conducted to its close. The nature of the controversy itself, turning upon the elementary principles of civil society, upon the natural rights of man, and the foundations of government, pointed the attention of men to the investigation of those principles; exercised all the intellectual faculties of the most ardent and meditative souls, and led to discoveries in the theory of government which have changed the face of the world.

The conflict of mind preceded that of matter. The question at issue, between Great Britain and her colonies, was purely a question of right. On one side, a pretension to authority, on the other a claim of freedom. It was a lawsuit between the British King and Parliament of the one part, and the people of the colonies, of the other, pleaded before the tribunal of the human race. It was an advantage to the cause of the colonies in that contest, that it reposed exclusively upon the basis of *right*. "Authority," says a keen observer of human nature,

"Authority, though it err like others,  
Hath yet a kind of medicine *in itself*  
That skins the vice on the top."

In the prelude to the war of Independence, British authority was constantly administering this self-healing medicine to her own wrongs. The first assertion of her right, was an act of Parliament to levy a tax. When she found its execution impracticable, she repealed the tax, but declared the right of Parliament to make laws for the colonies, in all cases whatsoever. To this mere declaration, the colonies could make no resistance. It skinned the vice on the top. With the next act of taxation, she sent fleets and armies for the healing medicine to her errors. She dissolved the colonial Assemblies, revoked the

colonial charters, sealed up the port of Boston, annihilated the colonial fisheries, and proclaimed the province of Massachusetts bay in rebellion. These were the healing medicines of British authority; while the only pretence of right that she could allege for all these acts, was the *sovereignty* of the British Parliament.

To contend against this array of power, the only defence of the colonies at the outset was the *right* and *justice* of their cause. From the first promulgation of the Stamp Act, the spirit of resistance, with the speed of a sunbeam, flashed instantaneous through all the colonies; kindled every heart and raised every arm. But this spirit of resistance, and this unanimity, would have been transitory and evanescent, had it not been sustained, invigorated, and made invincible, by the basis of eternal and immutable *justice* in the cause. It engrossed, it absorbed all the faculties of the soul. It inspired the eloquence which poured itself forth in the colonial Assemblies, in the instructions from the inhabitants of many of the towns to their Representatives, and even in newspaper essays, and occasional pamphlets by individuals. The general contest gave rise to frequent incidental controversies between the royal Governors, and the colonial Legislatures, in which the collision of principles, stimulated the energies, directed the researches, and expanded the faculties of those who maintained the rights of their country. The profoundest philosophical statesman of the British empire, at that period, noticed the operation of these causes, in one of his admirable speeches to the House of Commons. He remarked the natural tendency and effect of the study and practice of the law, to quicken the intellect, and to sharpen the reasoning powers of men. He observed the preponderant portion of lawyers in the colonial Legislatures, and in the Continental Congress, and the influence of their oratory and their argument upon the understanding and the will of their countrymen. Yet that same clear sighted and penetrating statesman, long after the Declaration of Independence, penned with his own hand an address to the people of the United States, urging them to return to their British allegiance, and assuring them that their struggle against the colossal power of Great Britain, must be fruitless and vain. Chatham himself, the most eloquent orator of England—whose language

it is the boast of honest pride to speak—Chatham, a peer of the British realm, in the sanctuary of her legislation, declared his approbation of the American cause, his disclaimer of all right in Parliament to tax the colonies, and his joy, that the people of the colonies had resisted the pretension. Yet that same Chatham, not only after the declaration, but after the conclusion of solemn treaties of alliance between the United States and France, sacrificed the remnant of his days, and wasted his expiring breath, in feeble and fruitless protestations against the irrevocable sentence to which his country was doomed—the acknowledgment of American Independence. It has been said, that men's judgments are a parcel of their fortunes; and they who believe in a superintending Providence have constant occasion to remark the wisdom from above, which unfolds the purposes of signal improvement in the condition of man, by preparing, and maturing in advance, the instruments by which they are ultimately to be accomplished. The intellectual conflict, which, for a term of twelve years, had preceded the Declaration of Independence, had formed *a race of men*, of whom the signers of that instrument were the selected and faithful representatives. Their constituents were like themselves. Life, fortune, and sacred honor, were staked upon the maintenance of that declaration. Not alone the life, fortune, and sacred honor of the individuals who signed their names, but with little exception, of the people whom they represented. One spirit animated the mass, and that spirit was *invincible*. It is a striking circumstance to remark, that in the island of Great Britain, *not a single mind existed* capable of comprehending this spirit and its power.—Deeper and more capacious minds, bolder and more ardent hearts, than Burke and Chatham, have seldom, in any age of the world, and in any region of the earth, appeared upon the stage of action. Yet we have here unquestionable demonstration that neither of them had formed a conception of the power, physical, moral and intellectual, of that unextinguishable flame which pervaded every particle of the man, soul and body, of the self declared independent American. It is an easy resource of vulgar controversy to transfer the stress of her argument from the cause, to the motive of her adversary, and the rottenness of any cause,



will generally be found proportioned to the propensity manifested by its supporters, to resort to this expedient. On the question which *bred* the revolution of independence, the taxation of the colonies by Parliament, all the great and leading minds of the British islands, all who have left a name on which the memory of posterity will repose, Mansfield and Johnson excepted, were on the American side. Burke, Chatham, Camden, Fox, Sheridan, Rockingham, Dunning, Barré, Lansdown, all recorded their constant, deep and solemn protestations, against the system of measures which forced upon the colonies the blessing of Independence. But when Chatham and Camden raised in vain their voices to arrest the uplifted arm of oppression, George Grenville and his abettors knew, or deemed so little of the spirit and argument of the Americans, that they affirmed it was all furnished for them by Chatham and Camden, and that *their* only motive was to supplant the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Adam Smith, the penetrating searcher A into the causes of the wealth of nations, whose book was published about a year after the Declaration of Independence, without deigning to spend a word upon the *cause* of America, with deep sagacity of face and gravity of muscle, assures his readers, that they are very weak, who imagine that the Americans will easily be conquered—for that the Continental Congress consists of men, who from shopkeepers, tradesmen and attorneys, are become statesmen and legislators. That they are employed in contriving a new form of government, for an extensive empire, which they justly flatter themselves will become one of the greatest and most formidable that ever was in the world. That if the Americans should be subdued, *all these men would lose their importance*—and the remedy that he proposes is, to start a new B object for their ambition, by forming a union of the colonies with Great Britain, and admitting some of the leading Americans into Parliament. Yet this man was the author of a Theory of Moral Sentiments in which he resolved all moral principle into sympathy.

True it was, that the shopkeepers, tradesmen and attorneys, were occupied in contriving a new form of government, for an extensive empire, which they might reasonably flatter themselves would become the greatest and most glorious that the world has ever seen. They

were at the same time employed in raising, organizing, training and disciplining fleets and armies to maintain the cause of freedom, and of their country, against all Britannia's thunders. And they were employed in maintaining by reason and argument before the tribunal of mankind, and in the face of heaven, the eternal justice of their cause. Thus they were employed. Thus had been employed the members of the Continental Congress, and thousands of their constituents, from the time when the princes and nobles of Britain had imposed these employments upon them, by the visitation of the Stamp Act. And now is it not matter of curious speculation, does it not open new views of human nature, to observe, that while the shopkeepers, tradesmen and attorneys of British North America were thus employed, Adam Smith, the profound theorist of moral sentiment, the illustrious discoverer of the sources of the wealth of nations, could in the depth and compass of his mighty mind, imagine no operative impulse to the conduct of men thus employed, but a paltry gratification of vanity, in their individual importance, from which they might easily be weaned, by the superior and irresistible allurements of a seat in the British House of Commons?

More than half a century has now passed away; the fruits of the employment of these shopkeepers, tradesmen and attorneys, transformed into statesmen and legislators, now form the most instructive, as well as the most splendid chapter in the history of mankind. They *did* contrive a new form of government for an extensive empire, which nothing under the canopy of heaven, but the basest degeneracy of their posterity can prevent from becoming the greatest and the most formidable that the world ever saw. They *did* maintain before earth and heaven, the justice of their cause. They *did* defend their country against all the thunders of Britain, and compelled her monarch, her nobles, and her people, to acknowledge the Independence which they had declared, and to receive their confederated republic among the sovereign potentates of the world. Of the shopkeepers, tradesmen and attorneys who composed the Congress of Independence, the career on earth has closed. They sleep with their fathers. Have they lost their individual importance? Say, ye who venerate as an angel upon earth, the solitary remnant of that



assembly, yet lingering upon the verge of eternity. Give me the rule of proportion, between a seat, from old Sarum, in the House of Commons, and the name of CHARLES CARROLL, of Carrollton, at the foot of the Declaration of Independence? Was honest fame, one of the motives to action in the human heart, excluded from the philosophical estimate of Adam Smith? Did he suppose patriotism, the love of liberty, benevolence and ardor for the welfare and improvement of human kind, inaccessible to the bosoms of the shopkeeper, statesman, and attorney legislators? I forbear to pursue the inquiry further, though more ample illustration might easily be adduced to confirm the position which I would submit to your meditations: that the conflict for our national Independence, and the controversy of twelve years which preceded it, did, in the natural course of events, and by the ordinary dispensations of Providence, produce and form a race of men, of moral and intellectual power, adapted to the times and circumstances in which they lived, and with characters and motives to action, not only differing from those which predominate in other ages and climes, but of which men accustomed only to the common place impulses of human nature, are no more able to form a conception, than blindness, of the colors of the rainbow.

Of this race of men, JAMES MONROE was one—not of those who did, or could take a part in the preliminary controversy, or in the Declaration of Independence. He may be said almost to have been born with the question, for at the date of the Stamp Act, he was in the fifth year of his age; but he was bred in the school of the prophets, and nurtured in the detestation of tyranny. His patriotism outstripped the lingering march of time, and at the dawn of manhood, he joined the standard of his country. It was at the very period of the Declaration of Independence, issued as you know at the hour of severest trial to our country, when every aspect of her cause was unpropitious and gloomy. Mr. MONROE commenced his military career, as his country did that of her Independence, with adversity. He joined her standard when others were deserting it. He repaired to the head-quarters of Washington at New York, precisely at the time when Britain was pouring her thousands of native and foreign mercenaries upon our shores;

when in proportion as the battalions of invading armies thickened and multiplied, those of the heroic chieftain of our defence were dwindling to the verge of dissolution. When the disastrous days of Flat Bush, Harlem Heights and White Plains, were followed by the successive evacuation of Long Island, and New York, the surrender of Fort Washington, and the retreat through the Jerseys; till on the day devoted to celebrate the birth of the Saviour of mankind, of the same year on which Independence was proclaimed, Washington, with the houseless heads, and unshod feet, of three thousand new and undisciplined levies, stood on the western bank of the Delaware, to contend in arms with the British Lion, and to baffle the skill and energy of the chosen champions of Britain, with ten times the number of his shivering and emaciate host; the stream of the Delaware, forming the only barrier between the proud array of thirty thousand veteran Britons, and the scanty remnant of his dissolving bands. Then it was that the glorious leader of our forces struck the blow, which decided the issue of the war. Then it was that the myriads of Britain's warriors were arrested in their career of victory, by the hundreds of our gallant defenders, as the sling of the shepherd of Israel prostrated the Philistine, who defied the armies of the living God. And in this career both of adverse and of prosperous fortune, JAMES MONROE was one of that little Spartan band, scarcely more numerous, though in the event more prosperous, than they who fell at Thermopylæ. At the Heights of Harlem, at the White Plains, at Trenton he was present, and in leading the vanguard at Trenton, received a ball, which sealed his patriotic devotion to his country's freedom with his blood. The superintending Providence which had decreed that on that, and a swiftly succeeding day, Mercer, and Haselet, and Porter, and Neal, and Fleming, and Shippen, should join the roll of warlike dead, martyrs to the cause of liberty, reserved MONROE for higher services, and for a long and illustrious career, in war and in peace.

Recovered from his wound, and promoted in rank, as a reward for his gallantry and suffering in the field, he soon returned to the Army, and served in the character of Aid-de-Camp to Lord Sterling, through the campaigns of 1777 and 1778: during which, he was present and

distinguished in the actions of Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. But, having by this been superseded of his lineal rank in the Army, he withdrew from it, and failing, from the exhausted state of the country, in the effort to raise a regiment, for which, at the recommendation of Washington, he had been authorized by the Legislature of Virginia, he resumed the study of the law, under the friendly direction of the illustrious Jefferson, then Governor of that Commonwealth. In the succeeding years, he served occasionally as a volunteer, in defence of the State, against the distressing invasions with which it was visited, and once, after the fall of Charleston, South Carolina, in 1780, at the request of Governor Jefferson, repaired, as a military commissioner, to collect and report information with regard to the condition and prospects of the southern Army and States; a trust, which he discharged to the entire satisfaction of the Governor and Executive, by whom it had been committed to him.

In 1782, he was elected a member of the Legislature of Virginia, and, by them, a member of the Executive Council. On the 9th of June, 1783, he was chosen a member of the Congress of the United States; and, on the thirteenth of December, of the same year, took his seat in that body, at Annapolis, where his first act was, to sit as one of those representatives of the nation into whose hands the victorious leader of the American Armies surrendered his commission. Mr. MONROE was now twenty-four years of age, and had already performed that, in the service of his country, which would have sufficed for the illustration of an ordinary life.

The first fruits of his youth had been given to her defence in war; the vigor and maturity of his manhood was now to be devoted to her welfare in council. The war of Independence closed as it had begun, by a transaction new under the sun. The fourth of July, 1776, had witnessed the social compact of a self-constituted nation, formed by Peace and Union, in the midst of a calamitous and desolating war. To carry that nation through this war, the sole object of which, thenceforward, was the perpetual establishment of that self-proclaimed Independence, a Standing Army became indispensable. Temporary levies of undisciplined militia, and enlistments for a few weeks, or

months, were soon found inadequate for defence against the veteran legions of the invader.—Enlistments for three years, were finally succeeded by permanent engagements of service during the war. These forces were disbanded at the peace. Successive bands of warriors had maintained a conflict of seven years' duration, but Washington had been the commander of them all. His commission, issued twelve months before the Declaration of Independence, had been commensurate with the war. He was the great military leader of the cause; and so emphatically did he exemplify the position I have assumed, that Providence prepares the characters of men, adapted to the emergencies in which they are to be placed, that, were it possible for the creative power of imagination to concentrate in one human individual person, the cause of American Independence, in all its moral grandeur and sublimity, that person would be no other than WASHINGTON. His career of public service was now at an end. The military leaders of other ages had not so terminated their public lives. Gustavus Vasa, William of Orange, the Duke of Braganza, from chieftains of popular revolt, had settled into hereditary rulers over those whom they had contributed to emancipate. The habit of command takes root so deep in the human heart, that WASHINGTON is perhaps the only example in human annals of one in which it was wholly extirpated. In all other records of humanity, the heroes of patriotism have sunk into hereditary Princes. Glorious achievements have always claimed magnificent rewards. WASHINGTON, receiving from his country the mandate to fight the battles of her freedom, assumes the task at once with deep humility, and undaunted confidence, disclaiming in advance all reward of profit, which it might be in her power to bestow. After eight years of unexampled perils, labors and achievements, the warfare is accomplished; the cause in which he had drawn his sword, is triumphant; the independence of his country is established; her union cemented by a bond of confederation, the imperfection of which had not yet been disclosed; he comes to the source whence he first derived his authority, and, in the face of mankind, surrenders the truncheon of command, restores the commission, the object of which had been so gloriously accomplished, and returns to mingle with the mass of his fellow citizens, in the

retirement of private life, and the bosom of domestic felicity.

Three years, from 1783 to 1786, Mr. MONROE continued a member of the Confederate Congress, and had continual opportunity of observing the utter inefficiency of that Compact for the preservation and welfare of the Union.

The union of the North American Colonies, may be aptly compared to the poetical creation of the world :

From HARMONY—from Heavenly Harmony  
This universal frame began;  
When Nature, underneath an heap  
Of jarring atoms lay,  
And could not heave her head—  
The tuneful voice was heard from high  
Arise, ye more than dead,  
Then cold and hot, and moist and dry,  
In order to their stations leap,  
And Music's power obey.

Such, with more than poetical truth, was the creation of the American Union.

When, on the fifth of September, 1774, a number of the delegates chosen and appointed by the several colonies and provinces in North America, to meet and hold a Congress at Philadelphia, assembled at the Carpenter's Hall,—on that same day, a new nation was created: then, indeed, it was but in embryo. Neither Independence, nor self-government, nor permanent confederation, were of the purposes for which that Congress was convened. It was to draw up and exhibit statements of the common grievances; to consult and confer upon the common violated rights; to address their fellow-subjects of Great Britain, and of the colonies, with complaint of wrongs endured, and humbly to petition his most excellent majesty, their most gracious sovereign, for redress. These purposes were performed, and totally failed of success; but the Union was formed; the seed of Independence was sown; and the Congress, after a session of seven weeks, on the twenty-sixth of October, dissolved.

When the second Congress met, on the 10th of May, 1775, the war had already commenced: blood had flowed in streams at Concord and Lexington; and scarcely had they been a month in session, when the fires of Charlestown ascended to an avenging heaven; and Warren fell a martyr to the cause of the Union

before that of Independence was even born.—Still, the powers and instructions of the delegates extended only to concert, agree upon, direct, and order such further measures as should, to them, appear to be best calculated for the recovery and establishment of American rights and liberties, and for restoring harmony between Great Britain and the colonies.

These objects were pursued with steadiness, perseverance, and sincerity, till the people, whom they represented, sickened at the humiliations to which they submitted; till insult heaped upon injury, and injury superadded to insult, aggravated the burden to a point beyond endurance: the decree of the people went forth: the whole people of the United Colonies declared them Independent States: the nation was born; like the first of the human race, issuing, full grown and perfect, from the hands of his Maker.

But while this Independence, thus declared, was to be maintained by a war,—of the successful issue of which, all spirit, but that of heroic martyrdom, might well despair—all the institutions of organized authority were to be created. By an act of primitive sovereignty, the people of the colonies annihilated all the civil authorities by which they had been governed: as *one corporate body*, they declared themselves a member of the community of civilized, but independent nations,—acknowledging the Christian Code of natural and conventional laws,—united, already, by solemn compact, but without organized government, either for the Union, or for the separate members; also, corporate and associated bodies, of which it was composed.

The position of the people of these colonies on that day, was indeed a new thing under the sun. The nature and character of the war was totally changed. Their relations, individual and collective, towards one another, towards the government and people of Great Britain, towards all the rest of mankind, were changed; they were men in society, and yet had reverted to the state of nature; they had no government, no fundamental laws. Inhabiting a territory more extensive than all Europe, previously divided into thirteen communities, little sympathizing with one another, and actuated by principles more of mutual repulsion, than attraction, with elements for legislation not only various, but hostile to each other, they were



called at one and the same time to wage a war of unparalleled difficulty and danger. To transfer their duties of allegiance, and their rights of protection from the Sovereign of their birth to the new republic of their own creation; and to rebuild the superstructure of civil society, by a complicated government, adequate to their wants; a firm, compact and energetic whole, composed of thirteen entire independent parts. The first and most urgent of their duties, because in its nature it admitted of no delay, was to provide for the maintenance and conduct of the war; but with all its difficulties, that was the least arduous of their duties. To organize the government of a mighty empire, was a task which had never before been performed by man. The undertaking formed an era in the annals of the human race; an era far surpassing in importance all others since the appearance of the Saviour upon earth.

There were fortunately a few fundamental principles upon which there was among the proclaimers of Independence, a perfect unanimity of opinion. The first of these was that the Union already formed between the Colonies should be permanent—perpetual—indissoluble. The second, that it should be a confederated Union, of which each Colony should be an independent State. Self governed by its own municipal Code—but of which each citizen, should be also a citizen of the whole. The third, that the whole confederation, and each of its members, should be republican; without hereditary monarch, without privileged orders. On the tenth of May, preceding the Declaration of Independence, Congress had passed a resolution, recommending to the several Colonies to adopt such Government as should, in the opinion of the Representatives of the people, best conduce to the happiness and safety of their constituents in particular, and America in general; and in the preamble to this Resolution, adopted five days later, they assigned as the reason for it the necessity that the exercise of every kind of authority under the crown of Great Britain, should be totally suppressed, and *all the powers of Government exercised under the authority of THE PEOPLE of the Colonies.*

And on the eleventh of June, 1776, the same day upon which the Committee was appointed to report the Declaration of Independence, it was resolved to appoint another Committee to pre-

pare and digest the form of a confederation to be entered into between the colonies, and a third Committee to prepare a plan of treaties to be proposed to foreign powers.

Thus far there had been no diversity of opinion among those whose minds were made up for the Declaration of Independence. The people of each colony were to construct their own form of Government: a form of Confederation was to be prepared for the whole. The history of mankind, ancient and modern, presented several examples of confederated *States*, not one of a confederated *Government*; and even of former confederations there was not one which extended over a territory equal to that of one member of the American Union. For a confederated *Government*, the people of the colonies were utterly unprepared. The constitutions of the States were formed without much difficulty, and, after more than half a century, although we have witnessed frequent and numerous changes in their organization, there have been scarcely any of important principle. The great features of the political system upon which American Independence was declared, remain unchanged—bright in immortal youth. For Union, for Independence, for self-government, the elements were all at hand, and they were homogeneous. There was no seed of discord and of strife among them. For the structure of the confederacy it was not so. There was first a general spirit of distrust and jealousy against the investment of the federal head with power. There were then local and sectional prejudices, interests and passions, tending to reciprocal discontents and enmities. There were diversities in the tenure and character of property in the different States, not altogether harmonizing with the cause of Independence itself. There were controversies of boundaries between many of the contiguous colonies, and questions of deeper vitality, to whom the extra-territorial lands, without the bounds of the colonial charters, but within the compass of the federative domain, would belong? So powerfully did these causes of discord operate, even in the midst of the struggle for Independence, that nearly five years elapsed after the Declaration, before the consent of the States could be obtained to the Articles of Confederation.

This experiment, as is well known, proved a total failure. The Articles of Confederation



were ratified by ten of the States as early as July, 1778. Maryland withheld her assent to them until March, 1781, when it first went into operation: and even then one of its principal defects was so generally perceived and foreseen, that on the preceding third of February, Congress had adopted a Resolution, declaring it indispensably necessary that they should be vested with a power to levy an impost duty of five per cent. to pay the public debt. Even this power some of the States refused to grant.

In December 1783, when Mr. MONROE took his seat in Congress, the first act of that body should have been to ratify the definitive treaty of peace with Great Britain, which had been signed at Paris on the preceding third of September. That treaty was the transaction which closed the revolutionary war, and settled forever the question of American Independence. It was stipulated that its ratifications should be exchanged within six months from the day of its signature; and we can now scarcely believe it possible, that but for a mere accident, the faith of the nation would have been violated, and the treaty itself cancelled, for want of a power in Congress to pass it through the mere formalities of ratification. By the articles of confederation, no treaty could be concluded without the assent of nine States.—Against the ratification there was not a voice throughout the Union; but only seven States were assembled in Congress. Then came a captious debate, whether the act of ratification was a mere formality for which seven States were as competent as nine, or whether it was the very medullary substance of a Treaty, which, unless assented to by nine States, would be null and void—a monstrous and tyrannical usurpation.

▪ All the powers of government, in free countries, emanate from the people: all organized and operative power exists by delegation from the people. Upon these two pillars is erected the whole fabric of our freedom. That all exercise of organized power should be for the benefit of the people, is the first maxim of government; and in the delegation of power to the government, the problem to be solved is the most extensive possible grant of power to be exercised for the common good; with the most effective possible guard against its abuse to the injury of any one. Our fathers, who formed the confederation, witnesses to the re-

cent abuse of organized power, and sufferers by it, mistook the terms of the problem before them, and thought that the only security against the abuse of power, was stinginess of grant in its organization: not duly considering that power not delegated, cannot be exercised for the common good, and that the denial of it, to their government, is equivalent to the abdication of it by themselves. All impotence of the government, therefore, thus becomes the impotence of the people who formed it; and in its result places the nation itself on a footing of inferiority, compared with others in the community of independent nations. Nor did they sufficiently foresee that this excessive caution to withhold beneficent power in the organic frame of government, necessarily and unavoidably leads to usurpation of it. The Ordinance for the Government of the north-western Territory, was a signal example of this course of things under the Articles of Confederation. A perusal of the journals of Congress, public and secret, from the year 1778, when the Articles of Confederation were completed, and partially adopted, till 1789, when they were superseded by the present Constitution of the United States, will give the liveliest and most perfect idea of the character of the Confederation, and of the condition of the Union under it. Among the mischievous consequences of the inability of Congress to administer the affairs of the Union, was the waste of time and talents of the most eminent patriots of the country, in captious, irritating and fruitless debates. The commerce, the public debt, the fiscal concerns, the foreign relations, the public lands, the obligations to the revolutionary veterans, the intercourse of war and peace with the Indian tribes, were all subjects upon which the beneficent action of Congress was necessary; while at every step, and upon every subject, they were met by the same insurmountable barrier of interdicted or undelegated power.—These observations may be deemed not inappropriate to the apology for Mr. MONROE, and for all the distinguished patriots associated with him, during his three years of service in the Congress of the Confederation, in contemplating the slender results of benefit to the public in all the service which it was possible for them, thus cramped and crippled, to render.

Within the appropriate sphere of action, however, to which the powers of Congress

were competent Mr. MONROE took a distinguished part. That body often resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole, to deliberate upon an empty Treasury, upon accumulating debts, and clamorous creditors; upon urgent recommendations to the State Legislatures, which some of them would adopt, simply, and some conditionally; others, indefinitely postpone; some, leave without answer; and others, sturdily reject. This Committee of the Whole referred every knotty subject to a Select Committee, from whom they would in due time receive an able, and thoroughly reasoned Report, which they would debate by paragraphs, and finally reject for some other debatable substitute, or adopt with numerous amendments, and after many a weary record of yeas and nays.

On the eighteenth of April, 1783, the Resolution of Congress had passed, declaring it absolutely necessary that they should be vested with a power to levy an impost of five per cent. On the thirtieth of April, 1784, another Resolution was adopted, recommending to the Legislatures of the States to grant to Congress the power of regulating commerce. And on the thirteenth of July, 1785, Congress debated the Report of a Committee of which Mr. MONROE was the Chairman, combining the objects of both those prior Resolutions, and proposing such alteration of the Articles of the Confederation, as was necessary to vest Congress with the power both to regulate commerce, and to levy an impost duty. These measures were not abortive, inasmuch as they were progressive steps in the march towards better things. They led first to the partial convention of delegates from five States, at Annapolis, in September 1786; and then to the general convention at Philadelphia, in 1787, which prepared and proposed the Constitution of the United States. Whoever contributed to that event, is justly entitled to the gratitude of the present age, as a public benefactor; and among them the name of MONROE should be conspicuously enrolled.

Among the very few powers which, by the Articles of Confederation, had been vested in Congress, was that of constituting a Court of Commissioners, selected from its own body, to decide upon any disputed question of boundary, jurisdiction, or any other cause whatever, between any two States in the Union. These

Commissioners were in the first instance, to be chosen, with mutual consent, by the agents of the two States, parties to the controversy; the final determination of which was submitted to them.

Such a controversy had taken place between the States of Massachusetts and New York, the agents of which attending in Congress in December, 1784, agreed upon nine persons, to constitute the federal court, to decide the question between the parties. Of these nine persons, JAMES MONROE was one: a distinction, in the twenty-sixth year of his age, indicating the high estimation in which he was already held throughout the Union. The subsequent history of this controversy to its final and friendly settlement, affords an illustration coinciding with numberless others, of the imbecility of the confederacy. On the twenty-first of March, 1785, Congress were informed by a letter from Mr. MONROE, that he accepted the appointment of one of the Judges of the Federal Court, to decide the controversy. On the ninth of June following, the agents from the contending States reported to Congress that they had agreed upon three persons, whom they named, as Judges of the federal Court, instead of three of those who had been appointed the preceding December, but had declined accepting their appointment: and the agents requested that a commission might be issued to the Court, as finally constituted, to meet at Williamsburg, in Virginia, on the third Tuesday of November, then next, to hear and determine the controversy.

On the second of November, of the same year, a representation was made by the agents of the two States, to Congress, that such had been the difficulties and delays in obtaining answers from several of the Judges, that the parties were left in suspense even to that hour; a hearing had thus been prevented, and further procrastination was unavoidable. They petitioned, therefore, that the hearing should be remitted to such a day as the parties should agree upon, and thereafter certify to Congress — and a Resolution passed accordingly.

On the fifteenth of May, 1786, a letter was received by Congress from Mr. MONROE, informing them that some circumstances would put it out of his power to act as a Judge for the decision of this controversy, and resigning his commission.

On the twenty-seventh of September follow-

ing, Congress were informed by the agents of the parties, that they had agreed upon a person to be a Judge, in the place of Mr. MONROE, and they requested that a new commission might be issued to the Court. The Court never met, for on the sixteenth of December, 1786, the litigating parties, by their respective agents at Hartford, in Connecticut, settled the controversy by agreement, between themselves, and to their mutual satisfaction. Of this the agents gave notice to Congress on the eighth of October, 1787, and they moved that the attested copy of the agreement between the two States, which they laid before Congress, should be filed in the Secretary's office—which was refused; that body declining even to keep upon their files the evidence of an accord between two members of the Union, concluded otherwise than as the Articles of Confederation had prescribed.

Mr. MONROE did not assign, in his letter to Congress, his reasons for resigning the trust which he had previously consented to assume. They were probably motives of delicacy, highly creditable to his character: motives, flowing from a source

“Beyond the fix'd and settled rules  
Of vice and virtue in the schools:”

motives, emanating from a deep and conscientious morality, of which men of coarser minds are denied the perception, and which, while exerting unresisted sway over the conduct actuated by them, retire into the self-conviction of their own purity. Between the period when Mr. MONROE had accepted, and that when he withdrew from the office of a Judge between the States of Massachusetts and New York, discussions had arisen in Congress, relating to a negotiation with Spain, in the progress of which, varying views of public policy were sharpened and stimulated by varying sectional interests, to a point of painful collision.

After the conclusion of the general peace at Paris, in 1783, Spain, then a feeble and superannuated monarchy, governed by corrupt, profligate and perfidious councils, possessed with other colonies of stupendous territorial extent, the mouths of the Mississippi, and both the shores of that father of the floods, from his first entrance into this continent, to a considerable extent inland. Above the thirty-first degree of latitude, the territorial settlements of the United States were spreading in their incipient but

gigantic infancy, along his eastern banks and on both shores of the mighty rivers, which contribute to his stream. Spain, by virtue of a conventional, long settled, but abusive principle of international law, disavowed by the law of nature, interdicted the downward navigation of the Mississippi to the borders upon the shores above her line; on the bare plea that both sides of the river were within her domain at the mouth. And well knowing that the navigation was equivalent almost to a necessary of life to the American settlers above, she formed the project at once of dallying negotiation with the new American Republic, to purchase by some commercial privilege, her assent to a temporary exclusion from the navigation of the Mississippi, and of tampering with the same American settlers, to seduce them from their allegiance to their own country, by the prospect of enjoying under her dominion as Spanish subjects, the navigation of the river, from which they were excluded as citizens of the United States.

In the collision between the claim of the United States of right to navigate the Mississippi by the laws of nature, and the treaty of peace with Great Britain, and the actual interdiction of that navigation by Spain, founded upon the usages of nations, hostilities between the two nations had already taken place. A citizen of the United States descending the Mississippi, had been seized and imprisoned at Natchez; and a retaliatory seizure of the Spanish post at Vincennes had been effected by citizens of the United States. According to all appearances, an immediate war with Spain, for the navigation of the Mississippi, or a compromise of the question by negotiation, was the only alternative which Congress had before them, and here again appeared a melancholy manifestation of the imbecility of the Union under the Articles of Confederation.

A diplomatic agent of the lowest order, under the title of *Encargado de Negocios*, had been appointed by the king of Spain to reside in the United States, and had been with much formality received by Congress, in July, 1785. Though possessed of full powers to conclude a treaty, he had not the rank of a Minister Plenipotentiary, and his title, otherwise unexampled in European diplomacy, was significant of the estimation in which his Catholic Majesty held the new American Republic. Immediately



after his reception, the Secretary of Congress for Foreign Affairs, John Jay, of New York, was commissioned to negotiate with the Spanish *Encargado*; but instructed, previously to his making propositions to the Spaniard, or agreeing with him on any article, compact or convention, to communicate the same to Congress. On the 25th of August ensuing, this instruction was repealed, and another substituted in its place, directing him in his plan of treaty, particularly to stipulate the right of the United States to their territorial bounds and the free navigation of the Mississippi, from the source to the ocean, as established in their treaties with Great Britain; and to conclude no treaty, compact or convention with Mr. Gardoqui, without previously communicating it to Congress, and receiving their approbation.

The navigation of the Mississippi soon proved an insurmountable bar to the progress of the negotiation. It was, *de facto*, interdicted by Spain. The right to it could be enforced only by war, and violence on both sides had already taken place. Spain denied the right of the people of the United States to navigate the Mississippi as pertinaciously and in as lofty a tone as Great Britain denies to us, on the same pretence, to this day, the right of navigating the St. Lawrence. After many ineffectual conferences with the Spanish negociator, the Secretary of Foreign Affairs requested further instructions from Congress, and in a personal address to that body, recommended to them a compromise with Spain, by the proposal of a commercial treaty in which for an adequate equivalent of commercial advantages to the United States, they, without renouncing the right to the navigation of the Mississippi, should stipulate a forbearance of the exercise of that right for a term of twenty-five or thirty years, to which the duration of the treaty should be limited.

This proposal excited the most acrimonious and irritated struggle between the delegations from the Northern and Southern divisions of the Union, which had ever occurred. The representation from the seven Northern States, unanimously agreeing to authorize the stipulation recommended by the Secretary, and the five Southern States, with the exception of one member, being equally earnest for rejecting it. The State of Delaware was not then represented. In the animated and passionate debates, on a series of questions originating in this

inauspicious controversy, the delegates from Massachusetts, and among them especially Rufus King, took a warm and distinguished part in favor of the proposition of the Secretary, while the opposition to it was maintained with an earnestness equally intense, and with ability not less powerful by the delegation from Virginia, and among them, pre-eminently, by Mr. MONROE. In reviewing at this distance of time the whole subject, a candid and impartial observer cannot fail to perceive that much of the bitterness which mingled itself unavoidably in the contest, arose from the nature of the Confederacy, and the predominant obligation under which each delegate felt himself to maintain the interests of his own State and section of the Union. The adverse interests and opposite views of policy brought into conflict by these transactions, produced a coldness and mutual alienation between the Northern and Southern divisions of the Union, which is not extinguished to this day. It gave rise to rankling jealousies and festering prejudices, not only of the North and South against each other, but of each section against the ablest and most virtuous patriots of the other. As by the Articles of Confederation, no treaty could be concluded but with the concurrence of nine States, the authority to make the proposal recommended by the Secretary was not given. The negotiation with Spain was transferred to the Government of the United States, as organized by the present National Constitution. The right of navigating the Mississippi from its source to the ocean, with a deposit at New Orleans, was within seven years thereafter, conceded to the United States by Spain, in a solemn treaty, and within twenty years from the negotiation with the *Encargado*, the Mississippi himself with all his waters and all his shores, had passed from the dominion of Spain, and become part of the United States.

In all the proceedings relating to the navigation of the Mississippi, from the reception of Mr. Gardoqui, till the acquisition of Louisiana and its annexation to the United States, the agency of Mr. MONROE was conspicuous above all others. He took the lead in the opposition to the recommendation of Mr. Jay. He signed, in conjunction with another eminent citizen of the State of New York, Robert R. Livingston, the Treaty which gave us Louisiana: and during his administration, as President of the



United States, the cession of the Floridas was consummated. His system of policy, relating to this great interest, was ultimately crowned with complete success. That which he opposed, might have severed or dismembered the Union. Far be it from me; far, I know, would it be from the heart of Mr. MONROE himself, to speak it, in censure of those illustrious statesmen, who, in the infancy of the nation, and in the helplessness of the Confederation, preferred a temporary forbearance of a merely potential and interdicted right, to the apparent and imminent prospect of unavoidable war. Let those who would censure them look to the circumstances of the times, and to the honest partialities of their own bosoms, and then extend to the memory of those deceased benefactors of their country that candor, in the construction of conduct and imputation of motives, which they will hereafter assuredly need themselves.

It was in the heat of the temper, kindled by this cause of discord, in the federal councils, that Mr. MONROE resigned his commission as a judge between the States of Massachusetts and New York. The opinions of both those States, indeed coincided together, in variance from that which he entertained upon the absorbing interest of the right to navigate the Mississippi. But he beheld their countenance—"that it was not toward him as before." He felt there was no longer the same confidence in the dispositions of North and South to each other, which had existed when the selection of him had been made; and he withdrew from the invidious duty of deciding between parties, with either of whom he no longer enjoyed the satisfaction of a cordial harmony.

By the Articles of Confederation no delegate in Congress was eligible to serve more than three years in six. Towards the close of 1786, the term of Mr. MONROE's service in that capacity expired. During that term, and while Congress were in session at New York, he formed a matrimonial connexion with Miss Kortright, daughter of Mr. L. Kortright, of an ancient and respectable family of that State.—This lady, of whose personal attractions and accomplishments it was impossible to speak in terms of exaggeration, was, for a period little short of half a century, the cherished and affectionate partner of his life and fortunes. She accompanied him in all his journeyings

through this world of care, from which, by the dispensation of Providence, she had been removed only a few months before himself. The companion of his youth was the solace of his declining years, and to the close of life enjoyed the testimonial of his affection, that with the external beauty and elegance of deportment, conspicuous to all who were honored with her acquaintance, she united the more precious and endearing qualities which mark the fulfilment of all the social duties, and adorn with grace, and fill with enjoyment, the tender relations of domestic life.

After his retirement from service in the Confederation Congress, assuming, with a view to practice at the bar, a temporary residence at Fredericksburg, he was almost immediately elected to a seat in the Legislature of Virginia; and the ensuing year, to the Convention, summoned in that Commonwealth, to discuss and decide upon the Constitution of the United States.

Mr. MONROE was deeply penetrated with the conviction that a great and radical change, in the Articles of Confederation, was indispensable, even for the preservation of the Union. But, in common with Patrick Henry, George Mason, and many other patriarchs of the Revolution, his mind was not altogether prepared for that which was, in truth, a revolution far greater than the severance of the United American Colonies from Great Britain: a revolution accomplishing that which the Declaration of Independence had only conceived and proclaimed: substituting a Constitution of Government for a people, instead of a mere Confederation of States. So great and momentous was this change, so powerful the mass of patriotism and wisdom, as well as of interest, prejudice and passion, arrayed against it, that we should hazard little, in considering the final adoption and establishment of the Constitution, as the greatest triumph of pure and peaceful intellect, recorded in the annals of the human race. By the Declaration of Independence the people of the United States had assumed and announced to the world their united personality as a Nation, consisting of thirteen Independent States. They had thereby assumed the exercise of primitive sovereign power: that is to say, the sovereignty of the people. The administrative power of such a people, could, however, be exercised only by

delegation. Their first attempt was to exercise it by confining the powers of *government* to the separate members of the Union, and delegating only the powers of a *confederacy* to the collective body. This experiment was deliberately and thoroughly made and totally failed. In other ages and other climes the consequences of that failure would have been anarchy: complicated and long continued wars: perhaps, ultimately, one consolidated military monarchy—elective or hereditary: perhaps two or three confederacies—always militant; with border wars, occasionally intermitted, with barrier treaties, impregnable fortresses, rivers hermetically sealed, and the close sea of a Pacific Ocean. One Standing Army would have bred its antagonist, and between them they would have engendered a third, to sit like chaos at the gates of Hell,

“Umpire of the strife,  
And, by decision, more embroil the fray.”

Not so did the people of the North American Union. They adhered to their first experiment of Confederacy, till it was falling to pieces, in its immediate weakness. After frequent, long and patient ineffectual struggles to sustain and strengthen it, a small and select body of them, by authority of a few of the State Legislatures, convened together to confer upon the evils which the country was suffering, and to consult upon the remedy to be proposed. This body advised the assembly of a Convention, in which all the States should be represented.—Eleven of them did so assemble, with Washington at their head; with Franklin, Madison, Hamilton, King, Langdon, Sherman, John Rutledge, and compeers of fame, scarcely less resplendent, for members. They immediately perceived that the Union, and a mere Confederacy, were incompatible things. They proposed, prepared and presented, for acceptance, a Constitution of Government for the whole people: a plan, retaining so much of the federative character, as to preserve, unimpaired, the independent and wholesome action of the separate State Governments; and infusing into the whole body the vital energy necessary for free and efficient action upon all subjects of common interest and national concernment.—This plan was then submitted to the examination, scrutiny and final judgment of the people, assembled by Representative Conventions, in

every State of the Confederacy. To the small portion of my auditory, whose memory can retrace the path of time back to that eventful period, I appeal for the firm belief that, when that plan was first exhibited to the solemn consideration of the people, though presented by a body of men, enjoying a mass of public confidence far greater than any other, of equal numbers, then living, could have possessed, it was yet, by a considerable, not to say a large numerical majority, of the whole people, sincerely, honestly and heartily disapproved. It was disapproved, not only by all those who perseveringly adhered to the rejection of it, but by great numbers of those who reluctantly voted for accepting it; considering it then as the only alternative to a dissolution of the Union: and of those who voted for it, of its most ardent and anxious supporters, it may, with equal confidence be affirmed, that no one ever permitted his imagination to anticipate, or his hopes to conceive the extent of the contrast in the condition of the North American people under that new social compact, with what it had been under the Confederation which it was to supersede.

It was, doubtless, among the dispensations of a wise and beneficent Providence, that the severe and pertinacious investigation of this Constitution, as a whole, and in all its minutest parts, by the Convention of all the States, and in the admirable papers of the *Federalist*, should precede its adoption and establishment. It may be truly said to have passed through an ordeal of more than burning ploughshares.—Never, in the action of a whole people, was obtained so signal a triumph of cool and deliberate judgment, over ardent feeling, and honest prejudices: and never was a people more signally rewarded for so splendid an example of popular self-control.

That Mr. MONROE, then, was one of those enlightened, faithful and virtuous patriots, who opposed the adoption of the Constitution, can no more detract from the eminence of his talents, or the soundness of his principles, than the project for the temporary abandonment of the right to navigate the Mississippi, can impair those of the eminent citizens of New York and Massachusetts, by whom that measure was proposed. During a Statesman's life, an estimate of his motives will necessarily mingle itself with every judgment upon his con-

duct, and that judgment will often be swayed more by the concurring or adverse passions of the observer, than by reason, or even by the merits of the cause. Candor, in the estimate of motives, is rarely the virtue of an adversary; but it is an indispensable duty before the definitive tribunal of posthumous renown.

When in the Legislature of Virginia, the question was discussed upon calling a State Convention to decide upon the Constitution of the United States, Mr. MONROE took no part in the debate. He then doubted of the course which it would be most advisable to pursue.—Whether to adopt the Constitution in the hope that certain amendments which he deemed necessary, would afterwards be obtained, or to suspend the decision upon the Constitution itself, until those amendments should have been secured. When elected to the Convention, he expressed those doubts to his constituents assembled at the polls; but his opinion having afterwards and before the meeting of the Convention, settled into a conviction, that the amendments should precede the acceptance of the Constitution, he addressed to his constituents a letter, stating his objections to that instrument, which letter was imperfectly printed, and copies of it were sent by him to several distinguished characters, among whom were General Washington, Mr. Jefferson, and Mr. Madison, who viewed it with liberality and candor.

In the Convention, Mr. MONROE took part in the debate, and in one of his speeches entered fully into the merits of the subject. He was decidedly for a change, and a very important one, in the then existing system; but the Constitution reported, had in his opinion defects requiring amendment, which should be made before its adoption.

The Convention, however, by a majority of less than ten votes of one hundred and seventy, resolved to adopt the Constitution, with a proposal of amendments to be engrafted upon it. Such too, was the definitive conclusion in all the other States, although two of them lingered one or two years after it was in full operation by authority of all the rest, before their acquiescence in the decision.

By the course which Mr. MONROE had pursued on this great occasion, although it left him for a short time in the minority, yet he lost not the confidence either of the people or of the

Legislature of Virginia. At the organization of the government of the United States, the first Senators from that State, were Richard Henry Lee and William Grayson. The decease of the latter in December 1789, made a vacancy which was immediately supplied by the election of Mr. MONROE; and in that capacity he served until May, 1794, when he was appointed, at the nomination of President Washington, Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France.

The two great parties which so long divided the feelings and the councils of our common country, under the denominations of Federal and anti-Federal, originated with the Union.—The Union itself had been formed by the impulse of an attraction irresistible as the adamant of the magnet and scarcely less mystical. It was an union however of subject colonies, then making no claim or pretension to sovereign power. But from the hour of the Declaration of Independence, it became necessary to provide for the perpetuity of the Union, and to organize the administration of its affairs. The extent of power to be conferred on the representative body of the Union, became from that instant an object of primary magnitude, dividing opinions and feelings. Union was desired by all—but many were averse even to a confederacy. They would have had a league or alliance, offensive and defensive, but not even a permanent confederacy or Congress. It was the party which anxiously urged the adoption of the Articles of *Confederation*, who thereby acquired the appellation of Federalists, as their adversaries were known by the name of Anti-Federalists. To show the influence of names over things, we may remark that when the Constitution of the United States was debated, it formed the first great and direct issue between the parties, which retained their names, but had in reality completely changed sides. The Federalists of the Confederacy had abandoned that sinking ship. They might then with much more propriety have been called Nationalists. The real Federalists were the opposers of the Constitution; for they adhered to the principle, and most of them would have been willing to amend the Articles of *Confederation*. This incongruity of name shortly afterwards became so glaring, that the Anti-Federalists laid theirs aside, and assumed the name sometimes of Republicans and sometimes of



Democrats. The name of *Republicans* is not a suitable denomination of a party of the United States, because it implies an offensive and unjust imputation upon their opponents, as if they were not also Republicans. The truth is, as it was declared by Thomas Jefferson, all are, and all from the Declaration of Independence have been, Republicans. Speculative opinions in favor of a more energetic government on one side, and of a broader range of Democratic rule on the other, have doubtless been entertained by individuals, but both parties have been disposed to exercise the full measure of their authority when in power, and both have been equally refractory to the mandates of authority when out. In the primitive principles of the parties, the Federalists were disposed to consider the first principle of Society to be the preservation of order; while their opponents viewed the benefit above all others in the enjoyment of liberty. The first explosion of the French Revolution, was contemporaneous with the first organization of the government of the United States; and France and Great Britain were shortly afterwards involved in a war of unparalleled violence and fury. It was a war of opinions; in which France assumed the attitude of champion for freedom, and Britain that of social order throughout the civilized world. While under these pretences, all sense of justice was banished from the councils and conduct of both; and both gave loose to the frenzy of boundless ambition, rapacity and national hatred and revenge. The foundations of the great deep were broken up. The two elementary principles of human society were arrayed in conflict with each other, and not yet, not at this hour is that warfare accomplished. Freedom and order were also the elementary principles of the two parties in the American Union, and as they respectively predominated, each party sympathized with one or the other of the great European combatants. And thus the party movements in our own country became complicated with the sweeping hurricane of European politics and wars. The division was deeply seated in the cabinet of Washington.—It separated his two principal advisers, and he endeavored without success, to hold an even balance between them. It pervaded the councils of the Union, the two Houses of Congress, the Legislatures of the States, and the people

throughout the land. The first partialities of the nation were in favor of France; prompted both by the remembrances of the recent war for American Independence, and by the impression then almost universal, that her cause was identified with that which had so lately been our own. But when Revolutionary France became one great army; when the first commentary upon her proclamations of freedom, and her disclaimer of conquest, was the annexation of Belgium to her territories; when the blood of her fallen monarch was but a drop of the fountains that spouted from her scaffolds; when the goddess of liberty, in her solemn processions, was a prostitute; when open atheism was avowed and argued in her hall of legislation, and the existence of an Omnipotent God was among the DECREES of her National Convention, then horror and disgust took the place of admiration and hope in the minds of the American Federalists. Then France became to them an object of terror and dismay, and Britain, as her great and steadfast antagonist, the solitary anchor of their hope—the venerated bulwark of their religion.

At the threshold of the war, Washington, not without a sharp and portentous struggle in his cabinet, followed by sympathetic and convulsive throes, throughout the Union, issued a Proclamation of Neutrality. Neutrality was the policy of his administration, but neutrality was not in the heart of any portion of the American people. They had taken their sides, and the Republicans and the Federalists had now become, each at least in the view of the other, a French and a British faction.

➤ Nor was the neutrality of Washington more respected by the combatants in Europe, than it was congenial to the feelings of his countrymen. The champion of freedom and the champion of order were alike regardless of the rights of others. They trampled upon all neutrality from the outset. The press-gang, the rule of war of 1756, and the order in council, combined to sweep all neutral commerce from the ocean. The requisition, the embargo, and the maximum left scarcely a tatter of unplundered neutral property in France. Britain, without a blush, interdicted all neutral commerce with her enemy. France, under the dove-like banners of fraternity, sent an Envoy to Washington, with the fraternal kiss upon his lips, and the piratical commission in his sleeve; with the



pectoral of righteousness on his breast, and the trumpet of sedition in his mouth. Within one year from the breaking out of hostilities between Britain and France, the outrages of both parties upon the peaceful citizens of this Union, were such as would have amply justified war against either, and left to the government of Washington no alternative, but that of reparation. At the commencement of the war, the United States were represented in France and England by two of their most distinguished citizens, both, though in different shades, of the Federal school; by Thomas Pinckney at London, and by Gouverneur Morris in France. The remonstrances of Mr. Pinckney against the frantic and reckless injustice of the British government, were faithful, earnest and indefatigable; but they were totally disregarded. Mr. Morris had given irremissible offence to all the revolutionary parties in France, and his recall had been formally demanded. From a variety of causes, the popular resentments in America ran with a much stronger current against Britain than against France, and movements tending directly to war, were in quick succession following each other in Congress. Washington arrested them by the institution of a special mission to Great Britain. To give it at once a conciliatory character, and to impress upon the British government a due sense of its importance, the person selected for this mission was John Jay, then Chief Justice of the United States.

JAMES MONROE was shortly afterwards appointed Minister Plenipotentiary to the Republic of France. In the selection of him, the same principle of conciliation to the government near which he was accredited, had been observed. But Washington was actuated also by a further motive of holding the balance between the parties at home by this appointment. Mr. Jay was of the Federal party, with a bias of inclination favorable to Britain; Mr. MONROE, of the party which then began to call itself the Republican party, inclining to favor the cause of Republican France. This party was then in ardent opposition to the general course of Washington's administration—and that of Mr. MONROE in the Senate had not been inactive. To conciliate that party too, was an object of Washington's most earnest solicitude. From among them he determined that the successor of Mr. Morris, in France, should be

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chosen, and the members of the Senate of that party were by him informally consulted to designate who of their number would, by receiving the appointment, secure for it their most cordial satisfaction. Their first indication was of another person. Him, Washington, from a distrust of individual character, declined to appoint. But he nominated Mr. MONROE, and the concurrence of the Senate in his appointment was unanimous. This incident, hitherto unknown to the public, has been followed by many consequences, some of them perhaps little suspected, in our history. The discrimination of character in the judgment of the first President of the United States, is alike creditable to him and Mr. MONROE. It was not without hesitation that he availed himself of the preference in his favor, nor without the entire approbation of the party with whom he had acted, including even the individual who had been rejected by the prophetic prepossession of Washington.

☛ The contemporaneous missions of Mr. Jay to Great Britain, and of Mr. MONROE to France, are among the most memorable events in the history of this Union. There are in the annals of all nations occasions, when wisdom and patriotism, and the brightest candor and the profoundest sagacity, are alike unavailing for success. There are sometimes elements of discord, in the social relations of men, which no human virtue or skill can reconcile. Mr. Jay and Mr. MONROE, each within his own sphere of action, executed with equal faithfulness, perhaps with equal ability, the trust committed to him, in the spirit of his appointment and of his instructions. But neutrality was the duty and inclination of the American administration, and neutrality was what neither of the great European combatants might endure. In the long history of national animosities and hatreds between the French and British nations, there never was a period when they were tinged with deeper infusions of the wormwood and the gall, than at that precise point of time.

Each of the parties believed herself contending for her national existence; each proclaimed, perhaps believed, herself the last and only barrier, Britain against the subversion of social order, France against the subversion of freedom throughout the world.

Mr. Jay, in the fulfilment of his commission,

concluded a Treaty with Great Britain, which established, on immovable foundations, the neutrality proclaimed by Washington; it reserved the faithful performance of all the previous engagements of the United States with France; some of which were, in their operation at that time, not consonant with entire neutrality: but, in return for great concessions on the British side, it yielded some points, also, which bore as little the aspect of neutrality in their operation upon France. Mr. MONROE, himself, favored the cause of France. Both Houses of Congress had passed Resolutions, scarcely consistent, at least, with impartiality, and Washington, under advice, perhaps over-ruled by the current of popular feeling, afterwards answered an address of the Minister of France, in words of like sympathy with her cause. Arriving in France, at the precise moment when the excesses of the revolutionary parties were on the turning spring tide of their highest flood, Mr. MONROE was received, with splendid formality, in the bosom of the National Convention, when not another civilized nation upon earth, had a recognized representative in France. He there declared, in perfect consistency with his instructions, the fraternal friendship of his country and her government, for the French people, and their devoted attachment to her cause, as the cause of freedom. The President of the Convention answered him in language of equal kindness and cordiality; though even then so little of real benevolence towards the United States, was there in the Committee of Public Safety, then the executive power of France, that it was to cut short their protracted deliberations, whether Mr. MONROE should be received at all, that he had addressed himself, in the face of the world, for an answer to that inquiry to the National Convention itself. Strong expressions of kindness are the ordinary common-places of the diplomatic intercourse between nations: and, like the customary civilities of epistolary correspondence between individuals, they are never understood according to the full import of their meaning; but extreme jealousy and suspicion at that time pervaded all the public councils of France.

She professed to be willing that the United States should preserve their neutrality, but she neither respected it herself nor acquiesced in the measures which it dictated. They were

no sooner informed that Mr. Jay had signed a Treaty with Lord Grenville, than they began to press Mr. MONROE with importunities to be informed, even before it had been submitted to the American Government, of all its contents.

There is, perhaps, no position more awkward and distressing, than that of being compelled to reject an unreasonable request from those whose friendship it is important to retain; for unreasonable requests are precisely those which will be urged with the greatest pertinacity. To enable Mr. MONROE to decline indulging the Committee with a copy of the Treaty, before it was ratified, he was under the necessity of declining to receive a confidential communication of its contents from Mr. Jay. The difficulties of his situation became much greater after the Treaty had been ratified, and was made public. The people of the United States were so equally divided, with regard to the merits of the Treaty, that it became the principal object of contention between the parties, and they were bitterly exasperated against each other. The French Government, which, during the progress of these events, had passed from a frantic Committee of Public Safety, to a profligate Executive Directory, took advantage of these dissensions in the American Union. They suspended the operation of the Treaties existing between the United States and France; they issued orders for capturing all American vessels, bound to British ports, or having property of their enemies on board; their diplomatic correspondence exhibited a series of measures, alike injurious and insulting to the American Government; and they recalled their Minister from the United States, without appointing a successor. It was, perhaps, rather the misfortune of all, than the fault of any one, that the views of Mr. MONROE, with regard to the policy of the American Administration, did not accord with those of President Washington. He thought that France had just cause of complaint; and, called to the painful and invidious task of defending and justifying that which he personally disapproved, although he never, for a moment, forgot the duties of his station, it was, perhaps, not possible that he should perform them entirely to the satisfaction of his Government. He was recalled, towards the close of Washington's administration, and Charles Cotesworth Pinckney was appointed in his place.

To the history of our subsequent controversies with France, until the Peace of Amiens, it will not be necessary for me to advert. Upon Mr. MONROE's return to the United States, the administration had passed from the hands of President Washington, into those of his successor. In vindication of his own character, Mr. MONROE felt himself obliged to go before the tribunal of the public, and published his "View of the conduct of the Executive in the Foreign affairs of the United States, connected with the mission to the French Republic, during the years 1794, '95 and '96.

Upon the propriety of this step, as well as with regard to the execution of the work, opinions were, at the time, and have continued, various. The policy of WASHINGTON, in that portentous crisis in human affairs, is, in the main, now placed beyond the reach of criticism. It is sanctioned by the nearly unanimous voice of posterity. It will abide, in unfading lustre, the test of after ages. Nor will the well-earned fame of Mr. MONROE, for distinguished ability, or pure integrity, suffer from the part which he acted in these transactions. In the fervor of political contentions, personal animosities, belong more to the infirmities of man's nature than to individual wrong, and they are unhappily sharpened in proportion to the sincerity with which conflicting opinions are avowed. It is the property of wise and honorable minds, to lay aside these resentments, and the prejudices flowing from them, when the conflicts, which gave rise to them, have passed away. Thus it was that the great orator, statesman, and moralist, of antiquity, when reproached for reconciliation with a bitter antagonist, declared that he wished his enmities to be transient, and his friendships immortal. Thus it was, that the congenial mind of JAMES MONROE, at the zenith of his public honors, and in the retirement of his latest days, cast off, like the suppuration of a wound, all the feelings of unkindness, and all the severities of judgment, which might have intruded upon his better nature, in the ardor of civil dissension. In veneration for the character of Washington, he harmonized with the now unanimous voice of his country; and he has left recorded, with his own hand, a warm and unqualified testimonial to the pure patriotism, the pre-eminent ability and the spotless integrity of John Jay.

That neither the recall of Mr. MONROE, from his mission to France, nor the publication of his volume, had any effect to weaken the confidence reposed in him by his fellow citizens, was manifested by his immediate election to the Legislature, and soon afterwards to the office of Governor of Virginia, in which he served for the term, limited by the Constitution, of three years. In the mean time, the Directory of France, with its Council of Five Hundred, and its Council of Elders, had been made to vanish from the scene, by the magic talisman of a soldier's sword. The Government of France, in point of form, was administered by a Triad of Consuls: in point of fact, by a successful warrior, then Consul for ten years—soon to be Consul for life: hereditary Emperor and King of Italy; with a forehead, burning for a diadem; a soul, inflated by victory; and an imagination, fired with visions of crowns and sceptres, in prospect before him.—He had extorted, from the prostrate imbecility of Spain, the province of Louisiana, and compelled her, before the delivery of the territory to him, to revoke the solemnly stipulated privilege, to the citizens of the United States, of a deposit at New Orleans. A military colony was to be settled in Louisiana, and the materials, for an early rupture with the United States, were industriously collected. The triumph of the Republican party, here, had been marked by the election of Thomas Jefferson to the Presidency: just before which, our previous controversies with France had been adjusted by a Treaty of Amity and Commerce, and shortly after which, a suspension of arms, between France and Britain, had been concluded, under the fallacious name of a Peace at Amiens. The restless spirit of Napoleon, inflamed, at the age of most active energy in human life, by the gain of fifty battles, dazzling with a splendor, then unrivalled but by the renown of Cæsar, breathing, for a moment, in the midway path of his career, the conqueror of Egypt, the victor of Lodi, and of Marengo, the trampler upon the neck of his country, her people, her legielators, and her constitution, was about to bring his veteran legions, in formidable proximity, to this Union. The transfer of Louisiana to France, the projected military colony, and the occlusion, at that precise moment, of the port of New Orleans, operated like an electric shock, in this country.



The pulse of the West beat, instantaneously, for war: and the antagonists of Mr. Jefferson, in Congress, sounded the trumpet of vindication to the rights of the nation; and, as they perhaps flattered themselves, of downfall to his administration. In this crisis, Mr. Jefferson, following the example of his first predecessor, on a similar occasion, instituted a special and extraordinary mission to France; for which, in the name of his country, and of the highest of human duties, he commanded, rather than invited, the services and self-devotion of Mr. MONROE. Nor did he hesitate to accept the perilous, and, at that time, most unpromising charge. He was joined, in the Commission Extraordinary, with Robert R. Livingston, then resident Minister Plenipotentiary, from the United States, in France, well known as one of the most eminent leaders of our Revolution. Mr. MONROE's appointment was made on the eleventh of January, 1803; and, as Louisiana was still in the possession of Spain, he was appointed also, jointly with Charles Pinckney, then Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States at Madrid, to an Extraordinary Mission to negotiate, if necessary, concerning the same interest there. The intended object of these negotiations was to acquire, by purchase, the island of New Orleans, and the Spanish territory, east of the Mississippi. Mr. Livingston had, many months before, presented to the French Government a very able memorial, showing, by conclusive arguments, that the cession of the Province to the United States, would be a measure of wise and sound policy, conducive not less to the true interests of France than to those of the Federal Union. At that time, however, the memoir was too widely variant from the wild and gigantic projects of Napoleon.

How often are we called, in this world of vicissitudes, to testify that

"There's a Divinity, who shapes our ends,  
Rough hew them how we will."

When Mr. MONROE arrived in France, all was changed in the Councils of the Tuileries. The volcanic crater was re-blazing to the skies. The war between France and Britain was re-kindling, and the article of most immediate urgency to the necessities of the first consul was money. The military colony of twenty thousand veterans already assembled at Hel-

ovet-Sluis to embark for Louisiana, received another destination. The continent of America was relieved from the imminent prospect of a conflict with the modern Alexander, and Mr. MONROE had scarcely reached Paris, when he and his colleague were informed that the French Government had resolved, for an adequate compensation in money, to cede to the United States the whole of Louisiana. The acquisition, and the sum demanded for it, transcended the powers of the American Plenipotentiaries, and the amount of the funds at their disposal; but they hesitated not to accept the offer. The negotiation was concluded in a fortnight. The ratifications of the treaty, with those of a convention appropriating part of the funds created by it to the adjustment of certain claims of citizens of the United States upon France, were within six months exchanged at Washington, and the majestic valley of the Mississippi, and the Rocky Mountains, and the shores of the Pacific Ocean became integral parts of the North American Union.

From France, immediately after the conclusion of the treaties, Mr. MONROE proceeded to England, where he was commissioned as the successor of Rufus King in the character of Minister Plenipotentiary of the United States. Mr. King was, at his own request, returning to his own country, after a mission of seven years, in which he had enjoyed the rare advantage of giving satisfaction alike to his own government, and to that to which he was accredited. Mr. MONROE carried with him the same dispositions, and had the temper of the British government continued to be marked with the same good humor and moderation which had prevailed during the mission of Mr. King, that of Mr. MONROE would have been equally successful. But with the renewal of the war revived the injustice of belligerent pretensions, followed by the violence of belligerent outrages upon neutrality. After the conclusion of the treaty with Mr. Jay, and especially towards the close of the preceding war, the British government had gradually abstained from the exercise of those outrages which had brought them to the verge of a war with the United States, and at the issue of a correspondence with Mr. King, had disclaimed the right of interference with the trade between neutral ports and the colonies of her enemies. Just before the departure of Mr. King, a con-



vention had been proposed by him in which Britain abandoned the pretension of right to impress seamen, which failed only by a capacious exception for the narrow seas, suggested by a naval officer, then at the head of the admiralty. But after the war recommenced, the odious pretensions and oppressive practices of unlicensed rapine returned in its train. In the midst of his discussions with the British government on these topics, Mr. MONROE was called away to the discharge of his extraordinary mission to Spain.

In the retrocession of Louisiana, by France to Spain, no limits of the province had been defined. It was retroceded with a reference to its original boundaries as possessed by France, but those boundaries had been a subject of altercation between France and Spain, from the time when Louis the 14th had made a grant of Louisiana to Crozat. Napoleon took this retrocession of the province, well aware of the gordian knot with which it was bound, and fully determined to sever it with his accustomed solvent the sword. His own cession of the province to the United States, however, relieved him from the necessity of resorting to this expedient, and proportionably contracted in his mind the dimensions of the province.—He ceded Louisiana to the United States without waiting for the delivery of possession to himself, and used with regard to the boundary in his grant, the very words of the conveyance to him by Spain. The Spanish Government solemnly protested against the cession of Louisiana to the United States, alleging that in the very treaty by which France had reacquired the province, she had stipulated never to cede it away from herself. Soon admonished, however, of her own helpless condition, and encouraged to transfer her objections from the cession to the boundary, she withdrew her protest against the whole transaction, and took ground, upon the disputed extent of the province. The original claim of France had been from the Perdido East to the Rio Bravo West of the Mississippi. Mobile had been originally a French settlement, and all West Florida, was as distinctly within the claim of France, as the mouth of the Mississippi first discovered by La Salle. Such was the understanding of the American Plenipotentiaries, and of Congress, who accordingly authorized President Jefferson to establish a collection district on

the shores, waters and inlets of the bay and river Mobile, and of rivers both East and West of the same. But Spain on her part reduced the province of Louisiana to little more than the Island of New Orleans. She assumed an attitude menacing immediate war; refused to ratify a convention made under the eye of her own Government at Madrid, for indemnifying citizens of the United States, plundered under her authority during the preceding war. Harassed and ransomed the citizens of the Union and their property on the waters of Mobile; and marched military forces to the borders of the Sabine, where they were met by troops of the United States, with whom a conflict was spared only by a temporary military convention between the respective commanders. It was at this emergency that Mr. MONROE proceeded from London to Madrid to negotiate together with Mr. Pinckney, upon this boundary, and for the purchase of the remnant of Spain's title to the territory of Florida. He passed through Paris on his way, precisely at the time to witness the venerable Pontiff of the Roman Church invest the brows of Napoleon with the hereditary imperial Crown of France, in the Cathedral of Notre Dame. While in Paris, Mr. MONROE addressed to the then Minister of Foreign Affairs, Talleyrand, a letter reminding him of a promise somewhat indefinite, at the time of the cession of Louisiana, that the good offices of France, in aid of a negotiation with Spain for the acquisition of Florida should be yielded: stating that he was on his way to Madrid to enter upon that negotiation, and claiming the fulfilment of that promise of France. He also presented the view taken by the government of the United States, that the limits of Louisiana as ceded by France to them extended from the Perdido to the Rio Bravo.—This letter was promptly answered by the Minister Talleyrand, with an earnest argument in behalf of the *Spanish* claim of boundary Eastward of the Mississippi, but expressing no opinion with regard to her pretensions Westward of that river. His Imperial Majesty had discovered, not only that West Florida formed no part of the Territory of Louisiana; but that he never had entertained such an idea, nor imagined that a retrocession of the province as it had been possessed by France, could include the District of Mobile. This argument was pressed with so much apparent candor

and sincerity, that it may give interest to the anecdote which I am about to relate as a commentary upon it. It happened that a member of the Senate of the United States was at New Orleans, when the Commissioner of Napoleon authorized to receive possession of the province arrived there, and before the cession to the United States. This Commissioner in conversation with the American Senator, told him that the military colony from France might be soon expected. That there was perhaps some difference of opinion between the French and Spanish governments as to the boundary; but that when the colony arrived, his orders were quietly to take possession to the Perdido and leave the diversities of opinion to be afterwards discussed in the Cabinet. This anecdote was related on the floor of the Senate of the United States, by the member of that body, who had been a party to the conversation.

But with this forgetful change of opinion in the new crowned head of the Imperial Republic, there was little prospect of success for the mission of Mr. MONROE at Madrid; to which place he proceeded. There in the space of five months, together with his colleague Charles Pinckney, he unfolded the principles, and discussed the justice of his country's claims, in correspondence and conferences with the Prince of the Peace, and Don Pedro Cevallos with great ability, but without immediate effect. The questions which Napoleon would have settled by the march of a detachment from his military colony, were to abide their issue by the more lingering, and more deliberate march of time. The state papers which passed at that stage of the great controversy with Spain, remained many years buried in the archives of the governments respectively parties to it. They have since been published at Washington; but so little of attraction have diplomatic documents of antiquated date, even to the wakeful lovers of reading, that in this enlightened auditory how many—might I not with more propriety inquire how few there are, by whom they have ever been perused? It is nevertheless due to the memory of Mr. MONROE and of his colleague to say that among the creditable state papers of this nation they will rank in the highest order:—that they deserve the close and scrutinizing attention of every American statesman, and will remain solid, however unornamented, monuments of intel-

lectual power applied to national claims of right, in the land of our fathers and the age which has now passed away.

In June, 1805, Mr. MONROE returned to his post at London, where new and yet more arduous labours awaited him. A new ministry, at the head of which Mr. Pitt returned to power, had succeeded the mild but feeble administration of Mr. Addington, and Lord Mulgrave as Minister for Foreign Affairs, had taken the place of the Earl of Harrowby. The war between French and British ambition was spreading over Europe, and Napoleon, by threats and preparations, and demonstrations of a purposed invasion of Great Britain, had aroused the spirit of that island to the highest pitch of exasperation. Conscious of their inability to contend with him upon the continent of Europe, confident in their unquestionable but not then unquestioned supremacy over him upon the ocean, the British government saw with an evil eye, the advantages which the neutral nations were deriving from their commercial intercourse with France and her allies. Little observant of any principle but that of her own interest, British policy then conceived the project of substituting a forced commerce between her own subjects and their enemies, by annihilating the same commerce enjoyed by her enemies through the privileged medium of the neutral flag. In her purposes of manifesting for her own benefit the superiority of her power upon the seas, British policy, has, as her occasions serve, a choice of expedients. In the present instance, for the space of two full years, she had suffered neutral navigation to enjoy the benefit of principles in the law of nations, formerly recognized by herself, in the correspondence between Mr. King and Lord Hawkesbury, shortly before the close of the preceding war. In the confidence of this recognition, the commerce and navigation of the United States had grown and flourished beyond all former example, and the ocean whitened with their canvass. Suddenly, as if by a concerted signal throughout the world of waters which encompass the globe, our hardy and peaceful, though intrepid mariners, found themselves arrested in their career of industry and skill; seized by the British cruizers; their vessels and cargoes conducted into British ports, and by the spontaneous and sympathetic illumination of British Courts of Vice Admiralty, adjudicated to the

captors, because they were engaged in a trade with the enemies of Britain, to which they had not usually been admitted in time of peace.

Mr. MONROE had scarcely reached London, when he received a report from the Consul of the United States at that place, announcing that about twenty of their vessels, had, within a few weeks, been brought into the British ports on the Channel, and that by the condemnation of more than one of them, the Admiralty Court had settled the *principle*.

And thus was revived the stubborn contest between neutral rights and belligerent pretensions, which had sown, for so many years, thickets of thorns in the path of the preceding administrations; which Washington had with infinite difficulty avoided, and which his successor had scarcely been fortunate enough to avoid. And from that day to the peace of Ghent, the biography of JAMES MONROE is the history of that struggle, and in a great degree the history of this nation—an eventful period in the annals of mankind; a deeply momentous crisis in the affairs of our Union. A rapid sketch of the agency of Mr. MONROE in several successive and important stations, through this series of vicissitudes, is all that the occasion will permit, and more, I fear, than the time accorded by the indulgence of my auditory will allow. The controversy was opened by a note of mild, but indignant remonstrance from Mr. MONROE to the Earl of Mulgrave, answered by that nobleman verbally, with excuse, apology, qualified avowal, equivocation, and a promise of written discussion, which never came. Mr. Pitt died; his ministry was dissolved, and he was succeeded as the head of the administration, by the great rival and competitor of his fame, Charles Fox. In the mean time the navies of France and Spain had been annihilated at Trafalgar, and the imperial crowns of Muscovy and of Austria, had cowered under the blossoming sceptre of the soldier of fortune at Austerlitz. Mr. Fox, liberal in his principles, but trammelled by the passions, prejudices, and terrors of his countrymen and his colleagues, disavowed the new practice of capturing neutrals, and the new principles in the Admiralty Courts which had so simultaneously made their appearance: but Mr. Fox issued a paper blockade of the whole coast, from the Elbe to Brest. He revoked the orders under which the British cruisers had swept the seas,

and released the vessels already captured, upon which the sentence of the Admiralty had not been passed, but he demurred to the claim of indemnity for adjudications already consummated. Of the excitement and agitation, raised in our country by this inroad upon the laws of nations and upon neutral commerce, an adequate idea can now scarcely be conceived. The complaints, the remonstrances, the appeals for protection to Congress, from the plundered merchants, rung throughout the Union. A fire spreading from Portland to New Orleans, would have scarcely been more destructive. Memorial upon memorial, from all the cities of the land, loaded the tables of the Legislative Halls, with the cry of distress and the call upon the national arm for defence, restitution and indemnity. Mr. Jefferson instituted again a special and extraordinary mission to London, in which William Pinckney, perhaps the most eloquent of our citizens then living, was united with Mr. MONROE. Had Mr. Fox lived, their negotiation might have been ultimately successful. While he lived, the cruisers upon the seas, and the Admiralty Courts upon the shores, suspended their concert of depredation upon the American commerce, and a treaty was concluded between the Ministers of our country, and Plenipotentiaries selected by Mr. Fox, which, with subsequent modifications, just and reasonable, suggested on our part, might have restored peace and harmony, so far as it can subsist, between emulous and rival nations. As transmitted to this country, however, the treaty was deemed by Mr. Jefferson, not to have sufficiently provided against the odious impressment of our seamen, and it was clogged with the declaration of the British Plenipotentiaries, delivered after the signature of the treaty, suspending the obligation upon an extraneous and inadmissible condition. Mr. Jefferson sent back the treaty for revival, but the mature and conciliatory spirit of Fox, was no longer to be found in the councils of Britain. It had been succeeded by the dashing and flashy spirit of George Canning. He refused to resume the negotiation. Under the auspices, not of positive orders, but of the well known *temper* of his administration, Berkley committed the unparalleled outrage upon the Chesapeake—disavowed, but never punished. The same came the orders in council of November 1807; the proclamation to sanction man-stealing from



American merchantmen by royal authority; and the mockery of an olive branch in the hands of George Rose—our embargo; the liberal and healing arrangement of David Erskine, disavowed by his government as soon as known—but not unpunished; a minister fresh from Copenhagen, sent to administer the healing medicine for Erskine's error, in the shape of insolence and defiance. Insult and injury followed each other in foul succession, till the smiling visage of Peace herself flushed with resentment, and the Representatives of the nation responded to the loud and indignant call of their country for war. When the British government refused to resume the negotiation of the treaty, the Extraordinary Mission in which MONROE and Pinckney had been joined, was at an end. Mr. MONROE, even before the commencement of that negotiation, had solicited and obtained permission to return home—a determination, the execution of which had by that special joint mission been postponed. He suffered a further short detention, in consequence of the exploit of Admiral Berkley upon the Chesapeake, and returned to the United States at the close of the year 1807. After a short interval passed in the retirement of private life, he was again elected Governor of Virginia, and upon the resignation of Robert Smith, was in the spring of 1811, appointed by President Madison, Secretary of State. This office he continued to hold during the remainder of the double Presidential term of Mr. Madison, with the exception of about six months at the close of the late war with Great Britain, when he discharged the then still more arduous duties of the War Department. On the return of peace he was restored to the Department of State; and on the retirement of Mr. Madison in 1817, he was elected President of the United States—re-elected without opposition in 1821. On the third of March, 1825, he retired to his residence in Loudon county, Virginia. Subsequent to that period, he discharged the ordinary judicial functions of a magistrate of the county, and of curator of the University of Virginia. In the winter of 1829 and 1830, he served as a member of the Convention called to revise the Constitution of that Commonwealth; and took an active part in their deliberations, over which he was unanimously chosen to preside. From this station, he was, however, compelled, before the close of the labors of the Convention, by se-

vere illness, to retire. The succeeding summer, he was, in the short compass of a week, visited by the bereavement of the beloved partner of his life, and of another near, affectionate and respected relative. Soon after these deep and trying afflictions, he removed his residence to the city of New-York: where, surrounded by filial solicitude and tenderness, the flickering lamp of life held its lingering flame, as if to await the day of the nation's birth and glory; when the soldier of the Revolution, the statesman of the Confederacy, the chosen chieftain of the constituted nation, sunk into the arms of slumber, to awake no more upon earth, and yielded his pure and gallant spirit to receive the sentence of his Maker.

Of the twenty years, which intervened between his first appointment, as Secretary of State, and his decease, to give even a summary, would be to encroach beyond endurance upon your time. He came to the Department of State at a time, when war, between the United States and Great Britain, was impending and unavoidable. It was a crisis in the affairs of this Union full of difficulty and danger. The Constitution had never before been subjected to the trial of a formidable foreign war; and one of the greatest misfortunes, which attended it, was the want of unanimity in the country for its support. This is not the occasion to revive the dissensions which then agitated the public mind. It may suffice to say that, until the war broke out, and during its continuance, the duties of the offices held by Mr. MONROE, at the head, successively, of the Departments of State and War, were performed with untiring assiduity, with universally acknowledged ability, and, with a zeal of patriotism, which counted health, fortune, and life itself, for nothing, in the ardor of self-devotion to the cause of his country. It is a tribute of justice to his memory to say, that he was invariably the adviser of energetic counsels; nor is the conjecture hazardous, that, had his appointment to the Department of War, preceded, by six months, its actual date, the heaviest disaster of the war, heaviest, because its remembrance must be coupled with the blush of shame, would have been spared as a blotted page in the annals of our Union. It should have been remembered, that, in war, heedless security, on one side, stimulates desperate expedients on the other; and that the enterprise, surely fatal to the un-



dertaker, when encountered by precaution, becomes successful achievement over the helplessness of neglected preparation. Such had been the uniform lesson of experience in former ages; such had it, emphatically, been in our own Revolutionary War. Strange, indeed, would it appear, had it been forgotten by one who had so gloriously and so dearly purchased it at Trenton. By him it was not forgotten: nor had it escaped the calm and deliberate foresight of the venerable patriot, who then presided in the executive chair; and, at this casual and unpremeditated remembrance of him, bear with me, my fellow-citizens, if, pausing for a moment from the contemplation of the kindred virtues of his successor, co-patriot, and friend, I indulge the effusion of gratitude, and of public veneration, to share in your gladness, that he yet lives—lives to impart to you, and to your children, the priceless jewel of his instruction: lives in the hour of darkness, and of danger, gathering over you, as if from the portals of eternity, to enlighten, and to guide.

Among the severest trials of the war, was the deficiency of adequate funds to sustain it, and the progressive degradation of the national credit. By an unpropitious combination of rival interests, and of political prejudices, the first Bank of the United States, at the very outset of the war, had been denied the renewal of its charter: a heavier blow of illusive and contracted policy, could scarcely have befallen the Union. The polar-star of public credit, and of commercial confidence, was abstracted from the firmament, and the needle of the compass wandered at random to the four quarters of the heavens. From the root of the fallen trunk, sprang up a thicket of perishable suckers—never destined to bear fruit: the offspring of summer vegetation, withering at the touch of the first winter's frost. Yet, upon them was our country doomed to rely: it was her only substitute for the shade and shelter of the parent tree. The currency soon fell into frightful disorder: Banks, with fictitious capital, swarmed throughout the land, and spunged the purse of the people, often for the use of their own money, with more than usurious extortion. The solid Banks, even of this metropolis, were enabled to maintain their integrity, only by contracting their operations to an extent ruinous to their debtors, and to themselves. A balance of trade, operating like universal fraud,

vitiating the channels of intercourse between North and South: and the Treasury of the Union was replenished only with countless millions of silken tatters, and unavailable funds: chartered corporations, bankrupt, under the gentle name of suspended specie payments, and without a dollar of capital to pay their debts, sold, at enormous discounts, the very evidence of those debts; and passed off, upon the Government of their country, at par, their rags—purchasable, in open market, at depreciations of thirty and forty per cent. In the meantime, so degraded was the credit of the nation, and so empty their Treasury, that Mr. MONROE, to raise the funds indispensable for the defence of New Orleans, could obtain them only by pledging his private individual credit, as subsidiary to that of the nation. This he did without an instant of hesitation, nor was he less ready to sacrifice the prospects of laudable ambition, than the objects of personal interest, to the suffering cause of his country.

Mr. MONROE was appointed to the Department of War, towards the close of the campaign of 1814. Among the first of his duties, was that of preparing a general plan of military operations for the succeeding year: a task rendered doubly arduous by the peculiar circumstances of the time. When the war, between the United States and Britain, had first kindled into flame, Britain, herself, was in the convulsive pangs of a struggle, which had often threatened her existence as an independent nation—in the twentieth year of a war, waged with agonizing exertions, which had strained, to the vital point of endurance, all the sinews of her power, and absorbed the resources, not only of her people then on the theatre of life, but of their posterity, for long after-ages. In the short interval of two years, from the commencement of her war with America, in a series of those vicissitudes by which a mysterious Providence rescues its impenetrable decrees from the presumptuous foresight of man, Britain had transformed the mightiest monarchies of Europe, from inveterate enemies into devoted allies; and, in the metropolis of her most dreaded, and most detested foe, was dictating to him terms of humiliation, and lessons of political morality. The war had terminated in her complete and unqualified triumph; her numerous victorious veteran legions, flushed with the glory, and stung with the ambition of

long-contested, and hard-earned, success, were turned back upon her hands, without occupation for their enterprise, eager for new fields of battle, and new rewards of achievement. Ten thousand of these selected warriors had already been detached from her multitudes in arms, commanded by a favorite lieutenant, and relative of Wellington, to share the beauty and booty of New Orleans, and to acquire, for a time which her after-consideration and interest were to determine, the mastery of the Mississippi, his waters, and his shores. The fate of this gallant host, sealed in the decrees of heaven, had not then been consummated upon earth. They had not matched their forces with the planters and ploughmen of the western wilds—nor learnt the difference between a struggle with the servile and mercenary squadrons of a military conqueror, and a conflict with the free-born defenders of their firesides, their children, and their wives. Besides that number of ten thousand, she had myriads more at her disposal—burdens at once upon her gratitude and her revenues, and to whom she could furnish employment and support, only by transporting them to gather new laurels, and rise to more exalted renown upon the ruins of our Union.

Such was the state of affairs, and such the prospects of the coming year, when immediately after the successful enterprise of the enemy upon our metropolis, Congress was convened upon the smoking ruins of the Capitol, and Mr. MONROE was called, without retiring from the duties of the Department of State, to assume in addition to them, those of presiding over the Department of War. Such was the emergency for which it became his duty to prepare and mature plans of military operations. It is obvious that they must be far beyond the range of the ordinary means and resources on which the government of the Union had been accustomed to rely. They were such as to call forth not only the voluntary but the unwilling and reluctant hand of the citizen to defend his country. They summoned the Legislative voice of the Union to *command* the service of her sons. The army, already authorized by Acts of Congress had risen in numbers to upwards of sixty thousand men: Mr. MONROE proposed to increase it to one hundred thousand, besides auxiliary military force; and, in addition to all the usual allurements to enlistment, to levy all deficiencies of effective numbers, by

drafts upon the whole body of the people. This resort, though familiar to the usages of our own revolutionary war, was now in the clamors of political opposition, assimilated to the conscriptions of revolutionary France, and of Napoleon. It was obnoxious not only to the censure of all those who disapproved the war, but to the indolent, the lukewarm and the weak. It sent the recruiting officer to ruffle the repose of domestic retirement. It authorized him alike to unfold the gates to the magnificent mansion of the wealthy, and to lift the latch of the cottage upon the mountains. It sounded the trumpet in the nursery. It rang "to arms" in the bed-chamber. Mr. MONROE was perfectly aware that the recommendation to Congress of such a plan, must at least for a time deeply affect the personal popularity of the proposer. He believed it to be necessary, and indispensable to the triumph of the cause. The time for the people to prepare their minds for fixing the succession to the presidential chair was approaching. Mr. MONROE was already prominent among the names upon which the public sentiment was now concentrating itself as a suitable candidate for the trust. It was foreseen by him, that the purpose of defeating the plan, would connect itself with the prospects of the ensuing presidential election, and that the friends of rival candidates, otherwise devoted to the most energetic prosecution of the war, might take a direction adverse to the adoption of the plan, not from the intrinsic objections against it, but from the popular disfavor which it might shed upon its author. After consultation with some of his confidential friends, he resolved in the event of the continuance of the war, to withdraw his name at once from the complicated conflicts of the canvass, by publicly declining to stand a candidate for election to the presidency. He had already authorized one or more persons distinguished in the councils of the Union, to announce this as his intention, which would have been carried into execution, but that the motives by which it was dictated, were suspended by the conclusion of the peace.

That event was the era of a new system of policy, and new divisions of parties in our federal Union. It relieved us from many of the most inflammatory symptoms of our political disease. It disengaged us from all sympathies with foreigners predominating over those

due to our own country. We have now, neither in the hearts of personal rivals, nor upon the lips of political adversaries, the reproach of devotion to a French or a British faction. If we rejoice in the triumph of European arms, it is in the victories of the cross over the crescent. If we gladden with the native countrymen of LaFayette or sadden with those of Pulaski and Kosciusko, it is the gratulation of freedom rescued from oppression, and the mourning of kindred spirits over the martyrs to their country's independence. We have no sympathies but with the joys and sorrows of patriotism; no attachments but to the cause of liberty and of man.

The first great object of national policy, upon the return of peace, was the redemption of the Union from fiscal ruin. This was in substance accomplished during the remnant of Madison's administration, principally by the re-establishment of a National Bank, with enlarged capacities and capital: enacted by Congress under the recommendation of the Executive, not through the Department, but with the concurrence of Mr. MONROE. He upon the cessation of the war, had retired from the easy though laborious duties of its department, and devoted all his faculties to the political intercourse of the nation with all others. There was a remnant of war with the pirates of Algiers, to which the gallant and lamented Decatur carried peace and freedom from tribute forever, at the mouth of the cannon of a single frigate. There were grave and momentous negotiations of commerce, of fisheries, of boundary, of trade with either India, of extinction to the slave trade, of South American freedom, of indemnity for enticed and depredated slaves, with Great Britain; others on various topics scarcely less momentous with France, with Spain, with Sweden; and with almost every nation of Europe there were claims unadjusted for outrages, and property plundered *upon the seas*, or, with more shameless destitution of any just or lawful pretext, in their own ports. There was a system of policy to be pursued with regard to the embryo states of Southern America, combining the fulfilment of the duties of neutrality, with the rightful furtherance of their emancipation.

Turning from the foreign to the domestic interests of the united republic, there were objects rising to contemplation not less in

grandeur of design; not less arduous in preparation for the effective agency of the national councils.

The most painful, perhaps the most profitable lesson of the war was the primary duty of the nation to place itself in a state of permanent preparation for self-defence. This had been the doctrine and the creed of Washington, from the first organization of the government. It had been encountered by opposition so determined and persevering, sustained by prejudices so akin to reason and by sensibilities so natural to freemen, that all the influence of that great and good man, aided by the foresight, and argument and earnest solicitude of his friends to carry it into effect, had proved abortive. An extensive and expensive system of fortification upon our shores; an imposing and well constituted naval establishment upon the seas, had been urged in all the ardor and sincerity of conviction by the federalists of the Washington school, not only without producing upon the majority of the nation the same conviction, but with the mortification of having their honest zeal for the public welfare turned as an engine of personal warfare upon themselves. By the result of this course of popular feelings, it happened that when the war in all its terrors and all its dangers came, it was to be managed and supported by those who to the last moment preceding it, had resisted, if not all, at least all burdensome and effective preparation for meeting it. A solemn and awful responsibility was it, that they incurred; and with brave and gallant bearing did they pass through the ordeal which they had defied. Well was it for them that a superintending Providence shaped the ends, rough-hewn by them: but it produced conviction upon their minds; and it overcame the repugnances of the people. A combined system of efficient fortification arming the shores and encircling the soil of the republic, and the gradual establishment of a powerful navy, were from the restoration of the peace unto his latest hour, among the paramount and favorite principles in the political system of Mr. MONROE for the government of the Union. In these objects, he had the good fortune to be supported as well by the opinions of his immediate predecessor, as by the predominant sentiments of the people. The system in both its branches was commenced in the administration and with the full concurrence of Mr. Madison.



It has continued without vital modification to this day. May it live and flourish through all the political conflicts, to which you may be destined hereafter, and survive your children's children, till augury becomes presumption.

There was yet another object of great and national interest, brought conspicuously into view by the war, which pressed its unwieldy weight upon the Councils of the Union, from the conclusion of the peace. It was the adaptation of the just and impartial action of the federal government to the various interests of which the Union is composed, with regard to revenue, to the payment of the public debt, to the industrious pursuits of the farmer and planter, of the pioneers of the wilderness, of the merchant and navigator, of the manufacturer and mechanic, and of the intellectual laborer of the mind, including all the learned professions and teachers of literature, religion and morals. To all this, a system of legitimate and equal governmental action was to be adapted; and vast and comprehensive as the bare statement of it will present itself to your minds, it was rendered still more complicated by the necessity of accommodating it to the adverse operation upon the same interests of foreign and rival legislation through the medium of commercial intercourse with our country. At the very moment of the peace, the occasion was seized of tendering to *all* the commercial nations of Europe a system of intercourse founded upon entire reciprocity, and a liberal and perfect equalization of impost and tonnage duties. This offer was very partially accepted, but has gradually extended itself to several of the European nations, and to all those of Southern America. It is yet incomplete, and its destiny hereafter is uncertain. It must perhaps ever so remain, as it must forever depend upon the enduring and concurrent will of other independent nations. The fair, the free, the fraternal system is that of entire reciprocity; and as the principles flowing from these impulses speed their progress in the civilization of man, there are grounds for hope that they may in process of time, universally prevail.

But there were other interests of high import calling for the legislative action to support them. The war had cut off the supply to a great extent of many articles of foreign manufacture, of universal consumption, and necessary for the enjoyment of the comforts of life.

This had necessarily introduced large manufacturing establishments, to which the application of heavy masses of capital had been made. The competition of foreign manufactures of the same articles, aided by bounties and other encouragements from their own governments, would have crushed in their infancy all such establishments here, had they not been supported by some benefaction from the authority of the Union. The adventurer in the Western territories, needed the assistance of the national arm to his exertions for converting the wilderness into a garden. Secure from the assaults of foreign hostility, the whole people had leisure to turn their attention to the improvement of their own condition. And hence the protection of domestic industry and the improvement of the internal communications between the portions of the Union remote from each other, formed an associated system of policy, embraced by many of our most distinguished citizens, and pursued with sincere and ardent patriotism. This system, however, was destined to encounter two obstacles of the gravest and most formidable character. The first, a question how far the people of the Union had delegated to their general government the *power* of providing for *their* welfare, of promoting their happiness, of improving *their* condition? The second, whether domestic industry and internal improvement, limited by localities less extensive than the whole Union, can be protected and promoted without sacrifice of the interests of one portion of the Union for the benefit of another. The divisions of opinion and the collisions of sentiment upon these points have been festering since the first advances of the system, till they have formed an imposthume in the body politic threatening its total dissolution. Mr. MONROE's opinion was, that the power of establishing a general system of internal improvement, had not been delegated to Congress; but that the power of levying and appropriating money for purposes of national importance, military or commercial, or for transportation of the mail was among their delegated trusts. These subjects have been discussed under various forms in the deliberations of Congress from that period to the present day, and they are yet far from being exhausted. An appropriation of ten millions of dollars annually to the discharge of the principal and interest of the public debt, was one of the earliest

measures of Mr. Madison's administration after the peace, and that purpose steadily pursued has reduced that national burden to so small an amount, that the total extinction of the debt can scarcely be protracted beyond a term of two or three years from this time.

On the retirement of Mr. Madison from the office of Chief Magistrate in 1817, Mr. MONROE was elected by a considerable majority of the suffrages in the electoral colleges, as his successor. This election took place at a period of tranquillity in the public mind, of which there had been no previous example since the second election of Washington. To this tranquillity, many concurring causes, such as are never likely to meet again, contributed, and among them, of no inferior order, was the existing state of the foreign, and especially the European world. It continued through the four years of his first Presidential term, at the close of which he was re-elected without a show of opposition, and by the voice little less than unanimous of the whole people.—These halcyon days were not destined to endure. The seeds of new political parties were latent in the withering cores of the old. New personal rivalries were shooting up from the roots of those which had been levelled with the earth. New ambitions were kindling from beneath the embers that had ceased to smoke. No new system of policy had marked the administration of Mr. MONROE. The acquisition of the Floridas had completed that series of negotiations (perhaps it were no exaggeration to say, of Revolutions) which had commenced under the confederation with the Encargado de Negocios of Spain. Viewed as a whole, throughout its extent, can there be a doubt in considering it as the most magnificent supplement to our national Independence presented by our history, and will there arise an historian of this Republican empire, who shall fail to perceive or hesitate to acknowledge, that throughout the long series of these transactions, which more than doubled the territories of the North American Confederation, the leading mind of that great movement in the annals of the world, and thus far in the march of human improvement upon earth, was the mind of JAMES MONROE?

In his Inaugural Address, delivered according to a prevailing usage, upon his induction to office, he took a general view of the existing

condition and general interests of the nation, and marked out for himself a path of policy, which he faithfully pursued. The first of the objects to which he declared that his purposes would be directed, was the preparation of the country for future defensive war. Fortification of the coast and inland frontiers—peace establishments of the army and navy, with an improved system of regulation and discipline for the militia, were the means by which this was to be effected, and to which his indefatigable labors were devoted. The internal improvement of the country, by roads and canals; the protection and encouragement of domestic manufactures; the cultivation of peace and friendship with the Indian tribes—tendering to them, always, the hand of cordiality, and alluring them by good faith, kindness, and beneficent instruction, to share and to covet the blessings of civilization; a prudent, judicious, and economical, administration of the Treasury; with the profitable, and, at the same time liberal, management of the public lands, then first beginning to disclose their active and appreciating value, as national property: all these were announced as the interests of the great community, which he surveyed as committed to his charge, and to the faithful custody and advancement of which, his unremitting exertions should be directed: and never was pledge with more entire self-devotion redeemed.

At the first Session of Congress, after his election to the Presidency, Mr. MONROE deemed it his duty, in his annual message to that body, to declare to them his opinion, that the power to establish a system of Internal Improvement by the construction of roads and canals, was not possessed by Congress. But, being also of opinion, that no country of such vast extent ever offered equal inducements to improvements of this kind, and that, never were consequences, of such magnitude, involved in them, he earnestly recommended to Congress, to urge upon the States the adoption of an amendment which should confer the right upon them: and with it, the right of instituting seminaries of learning, for the all-important purpose of diffusing knowledge among our fellow citizens throughout the United States. Of the adoption of such an amendment, if proposed at that time, he scarcely entertained a doubt; but a majority of both Houses of the National Legislature were

firmly of opinion that this power had already been granted: nor has the majority of any Congress, since that time, been enabled to conciliate the conclusions that a power, competent to the annexation of Louisiana to this Union, was incompetent to the construction of a post-road, to the opening of a canal, or to the diffusion of the light of Heaven upon the mind of after-ages, by the institution of seminaries of learning.

Notwithstanding the manifestation of these opinions of Mr. MONROE, a subsequent Congress did pass an act for the maintenance and reparation of the Cumberland Road, and for the erecting of toll-gates upon it. Firm and consistent in the constitutional views which he had taken, he deemed it his duty to apply to this act his Presidential arresting power; and, in returning the Bill to the House where it originated, justified his exercise of prerogative in an able and elaborate exposition of the reasons of his opinions. This work, probably, contains whatever of argument the intellectual power of man can eviscerate from reason, against the exercise, by Congress, of the contested power. It arrested, to a considerable extent, the progress of Internal Improvement; and, succeeded by similar scruples in the mind of one of his successors, has held them in abeyance to this day.

The opinions of JAMES MONROE upon doubtful or controverted points of Constitutional Law, can never cease to be deserving of profound respect. They were never lightly entertained. They were always deliberate, always disinterested, always sincere. At a subsequent period of his administration, as it drew towards its close, a modification suggested itself to his mind, warranting a compromise between the doctrines of those who invoked the beneficent action of Congress for national improvement, and of those who denied to the Supreme Councils of the nation the right of conferring blessings upon the people. In his annual Message to Congress on the 2d of December, 1823, he announced his belief that Congress did possess the power of *appropriating money* for the construction of a Canal to connect together the waters of the Chesapeake and the Ohio (the jurisdiction remaining to the States through which the Canal would pass.) This of course included the concession of the same right of appropriating money for all other like objects

of national interest, and it was accompanied with a recommendation to Congress to consider the expediency of authorizing by an adequate appropriation the employment of a suitable number of the Officers of the Corps of Engineers, to examine the unexplored ground during the ensuing season, and to report their opinion thereon; extending also their examination to the several routes through which the waters of the Ohio might be connected, by Canals, with those of Lake Erie. Under this recommendation, an Act of Congress was passed, and on the 30th of April, 1824, received the signature of Mr. MONROE, appropriating the sum of thirty thousand dollars; authorizing and enabling the President of the United States, to cause the necessary surveys, plans and estimates to be made of the routes of such Roads and Canals as he might deem of national importance, in a commercial or military point of view, or necessary for the transportation of the public mail; designating in the case of each Canal, what parts might be made capable of sloop navigation. The results of the surveys to be laid before Congress. And the President was authorized to employ Civil Engineers, with such officers of the several military corps in the public service as he might detail for that service, to accomplish the purposes of the Act.

"Sink down, ye mountains! and ye vallies—rise!"

Rise! Rise, before your forefathers, here assembled, ye unborn ages of after-time! Rise! and bid the feeble and perishing voice, which now addresses them, proclaim your gratitude to your and their Creator, for having disposed the hearts of that portion of their Representatives, who then composed their Supreme National Council, to the passage of that Act. Exult and shout for joy! Rejoice! that, if for you, there are neither Rocky Mountains, nor Oasis of the Desert, from the rivers of the Southern Ocean to the shores of the Atlantic Sea: Rejoice! that, if for you, the waters of the Columbia mingle in union with the streams of the Delaware, the Lakes of the St. Lawrence, and the floods of the Mississippi: Rejoice! that, if for you, every valley has been exalted, and every mountain and hill has been made low, the crooked straight, and the rough places plain: Rejoice! that, if for you, Time has been divested of his delays, and Space



disburthened of his obstructions: Rejoice! that, if for you, the distant have been drawn near, and the repulsive allured to mutual attraction: that, if for you, the North American Continent swarms with unnumbered multitudes; of hearts beating as if from one bosom; of voices, speaking but with one tongue; of freemen, constituting one confederated and united Republic; of brethren, never to rise, nation against nation, in hostile arms; of brethren, to fulfil the blessed prophecy of ancient times, that war shall be no more: to the power of applying the superfluous revenues of these, your forefathers, by their representatives in the Congress of this Union, to the improvement of *your* condition, you are, under God, indebted for the enjoyment of all these unspeakable blessings.

The system of Internal Improvement, then, though severely checked, by the opinion that the people of this Union have practically denied to themselves the power of bettering their own condition, by restraining their government from the exercise of the faculties, by which alone it can be made effective, was commenced under the administration of JAMES MONROE: commenced with his sanction: commenced at his earnest recommendation. And if, in after-ages, every leaf in the chaplet of his renown, shall be examined by the scrutinizing eye of grateful memory, to find, in the perennial green of all, one of more unfading verdure than the rest, that leaf shall unfold itself from the stem of Internal Improvement.

It is not within the scope of your intention, nor is it the purpose of this discourse, to review the numerous and important Acts of Mr. MONROE's administration. In the multitude of a great nation's public affairs, there is no official act of their Chief Magistrate, however momentous, or however minute, but should be traceable to a dictate of duty, pointing to the welfare of the people. Such was the cardinal principle of Mr. MONROE. In his first address, upon his election to the Presidency, he had exposed the general principles by which his conduct, in the discharge of his great trust, would be regulated. In his second Inaugural Address, he succinctly reviewed that portion of the career through which he had passed, fortunately sanctioned by public approbation; and promised perseverance in it, to the close of his public service. And, in his last annual Message to Congress, on the seventh of De-

cember, 1824, announcing his retirement from public life, after the close of that session of the Legislature, he reviewed the whole course of his administration, comparing it with the pledges which he had given at its commencement, and at its middle term, appealing to the judgment and consciousness of those whom he addressed, for its unity of principle as one consistent whole, not exempt indeed, from the errors and infirmities incident to all human action, but characteristic of purposes always honest and sincere, of intentions always pure, of labors outlasting the daily circuit of the sun, and outwatching the vigils of the night—and what *he* said not, but a faithful witness is bound to record; of a mind anxious and unwearied in the pursuit of truth and right: patient of inquiry; patient of contradiction; courteous, even in the collision of sentiment; sound in its ultimate judgments; and firm in its final conclusions.

Such my fellow citizens was JAMES MONROE. Such was the man, who presents the only example of one whose public life commenced with the War of Independence, and is identified with all the important events of your history from that day forth for a full half century.—And now, what is the purpose for which we have here assembled to do honor to his memory? Is it to scatter perishable flowers upon the yet unsodded grave of a public benefactor? Is it to mingle tears of sympathy and of consolation, with those of mourning and bereaved children? Is it to do honor to ourselves, by manifesting a becoming sensibility, at the departure of one, who by a long career of honor and of usefulness has been to us all as a friend and brother? Or is it not rather to mark the memorable incidents of a life signalized by all the properties which embody the precepts of virtue and the principles of wisdom? Is it not to pause for a moment from the passions of our own bosoms, and the agitation of our own interests, to survey in its whole extent the long and little-beaten path of the great and good: to fix with intense inspection our own vision, and to point the ardent but unsettled gaze of our children upon that resplendent row of crescent lamps, fed with the purest vital air, which illuminate the path of the hero, the statesman and the sage. Have you a son of ardent feelings and ingenuous mind, docile to instruction, and panting for honorable distinction? point

him to the pallid cheek and agonizing form of JAMES MONROE, at the opening blossom of life, weltering in his blood on the field of Trenton, for the cause of his country. Then turn his eye to the same form, seven years later, in health and vigor, still in the bloom of youth, but seated among the Conscript Fathers of the land to receive entwined with all its laurels the sheathed and triumphant sword of Washington. Guide his eye along to the same object, investigating by the midnight lamp the laws of nature and nations, and unfolding them, at once with all the convictions of reason and all the persuasions of eloquence, to demonstrate the rights of his countrymen to the contested Navigation of the Mississippi, in the Hall of Congress. Follow him with this trace in his hand, through a long series of years, by laborious travels and intricate Negotiations, at Imperial Courts, and in the Palaces of Kings, winding his way amidst the ferocious and party colored Revolutions of France, and the life-guard favorites and Camarillas of Spain. Then look at the map of United North America, as it was at the definitive peace of 1783. Compare it with the map of that same Empire as it is now; limited by the Sabine and the Pacific Ocean, and say, the change, more than of any other man, living or dead, was the work of JAMES MONROE. See him pass successively from the Hall of the Confederation Congress to the Legislative Assembly of his native Commonwealth; to their Convention which ratified the Constitution of the North American people; to the Senate of the Union; to the Chair of Diplomatic Intercourse with ultra Revolutionary France; back to the Executive honors of his native State; again to Embassies of transcendent magnitude, to France, to Spain, to Britain; restored once more to retirement and his country; elevated again to the highest trust of his State; transferred successively to the two pre-eminent Departments of Peace and War, in the National Government; and at the most momentous crisis burthened with the duties of both—and finally raised, first by the suffrages of a majority, and at last by the unanimous call of his countrymen to the Chief Magistracy of the Union. There behold him for a term of eight years, strengthening his country for defence by a system of combined fortifications, military and naval, sustaining her rights, her dignity and honor abroad; soothing

her dissensions, and conciliating her acerbities at home; controlling by a firm though peaceful policy the hostile spirit of the European Alliance against Republican Southern America; extorting by the mild compulsion of reason, the shores of the Pacific from the stipulated acknowledgment of Spain; and leading back the imperial autocrat of the North, to his lawful boundaries, from his hastily asserted dominion over the Southern Ocean. Thus strengthening and consolidating the federative edifice of his country's Union, till he was entitled to say like Augustus Cæsar of his imperial city, that he had found her built of brick and left her constructed of marble.

In concluding this discourse, permit me, fellow citizens, to revert to the sentiment with which it commenced; and if it be true that a superintending Providence adapts the talents and energies of men to the trials by which they are to be tested, it is fitting for us to be admonished that the trial may also be adapted to the talents destined to meet it. Our country, by the bountiful dispensations of gracious Heaven, is, and for a series of years has been blessed with profound peace; but when the first father of our race had exhibited before him by the Archangel sent to announce his doom and to console him in his fall, the fortunes, and the misfortunes of his descendants, he saw that the deepest of their miseries would befall them, while favored with all the blessings of peace, and in the bitterness of his anguish he exclaimed

"Now I see

Peace to corrupt, no less than war to waste."

It is the very fervor of the noon-day sun,\* in the cloudless atmosphere of a summer sky, which breeds

"the sweeping whirlwind's sway,  
That, hush'd in grim repose, expects his evening prey."

You have insured the gallant ship, which ploughs the waves, freighted with your lives and your children's fortunes, from the fury of the tempest above, and from the treachery of the wave beneath. Beware of the danger against which you can alone insure yourselves—the latent defect of the gallant ship herself. Pass but a few short days, and forty years will have elapsed since the voice of him, who ad-

dresses you, speaking to your fathers, from this hallowed spot, gave for you, in the face of Heaven, the solemn pledge, that if, in the course of your career upon earth, emergencies should arise, calling for the exercise of those energies and virtues which, in times of tranquillity and peace, remain, by the will of Heaven, dormant in the human bosom, you would prove yourselves not unworthy of the sires who had toiled and fought and bled, for the independence of their country. Nor has that pledge been unredeemed. You have maintained, through times of trial and danger, the inheritance of freedom, of union, of independence, bequeathed you by your forefathers. It remains for you only to transmit the same peerless legacy, unimpaired, to your children of the next succeeding age. To this end, let us join in humble supplication to the Founder of empires and the Creator of all worlds, that he would continue to your posterity, the smiles

which his favor has bestowed upon you: and since "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," that he would enlighten and lead the advancing generation in the way they should go. That in all the perils and all the mischances which may threaten or befall our United Republic, in after times, he would raise up from among your sons, deliverers to enlighten her Councils, to defend her freedom, and if need be to lead her armies to victory.— And should the gloom of the year of Independence ever again overspread the sky, or the metropolis of your empire be once more destined to smart under the scourge of an invader's hand, that there never may be found wanting among the children of your country a warrior to bleed, a statesman to counsel, a chief to direct and govern, inspired with all the virtues, and endowed with all the faculties, which have been so signally displayed in the life of JAMES MONROE.





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## DR. LARDNER'S LECTURES.

### LECTURE VII.....WEATHER ALMANACS.

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 etore the Perpendicular to Walls of a Building—Im-  
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### LECTURE LIV....THE STELLAR UNIVERSE.

#### (First Lecture.)

Range of Vision—Augmented by the Telescope—*Periodic Stars*—Examples of this Class—Various Hypotheses to explain these Appearances—*Temporary Stars*—Remarkable Examples of this Class—*Double Stars*—Their vast Number—Telescopic Views of them—Researches of Sir W. Herschel—Extension of Gravitation to the Stars—Their elliptic Orbits discovered—Effects of double and colored Suns—*Proper Motions of the Stars*—Probable Motion of the Solar System—Analysis of its Effects—Motions of the Stars, &c. &c.

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### LECTURE LVI....THE STEAM-ENGINE.

#### (First Lecture.)

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### LECTURE LVII.....THE STEAM-ENGINE.

#### (Second Lecture.)

Mechanical Force of Steam—Watt finds Condensation in the Cylinder incompatible with a due Economy of Fuel—Conceives the notion of Condensing out of the Cylinder—Invents the Air-Pump—Substitutes Steam Pressure for Atmospheric Pressure—Invents the Steam Case or Jacket—His Models—Difficulties of bringing the Improved Engine into Use—Watt employed by Roebuck—His Partnership—His first Patent—His Single-Acting Engine—Discovery of the Expansive Action of Steam—Extension of the Steam-Engine to Manufactures—Attempts of Papin, Savery, Hull, Champion, Stewart, and Wasbrough—Watt's Second Patent—Sun-and-Planet Wheels—Valves of Double-Acting Engine.

### LECTURE LVIII.....THE STEAM-ENGINE.


#### (Third Lecture.)


Methods of Connecting the Piston-Rod and Beam in the Double-Acting Engine—Rack and Sector—Parallel Motion—Connection of Piston-Rod and Beam—Connecting-Rod and Crank—Fly-Wheel—Shuttle-Valve—Governor—Construction and Operation of the Double-Acting Engine—Eccentric—Cocks and Valves—Single-Clack Valves—Double-Clack Valves—Conical Valves—Slide Valves—Murray's Slides—The D Valves—Seaward's Slides—Cocks—Pistons—Cartwright's Engine.

### LECTURE LIX.....THE STEAM-ENGINE.

#### (Fourth Lecture.)

Analysis of Coal—Process of Combustion—Heat evolved in it—Form and Structure of Boiler—Wagon-

 The above Work was originally published in Fourteen Numbers or Parts, and sold at the extremely low price of 25 cents per Number. Any of the Numbers can still be purchased. The entire Work is now completed and sold in two large octavo volumes of about 600 pages each, well bound in full cloth, illustrated by **350** Engravings, and sold at **\$4 50**.

 District School Libraries can order these Lectures through any of the Booksellers or Country Merchants. Parents, Teachers, Superintendents and Trustees of Common Schools, Farmers, Mechanics, and all, indeed, who have any desire to increase their store of useful information on the subjects embraced in these volumes, are earnestly entreated to examine this Work before they throw away their money on the trash, or even worse than trash, that is now so rapidly inundating the country.

From among the numerous Recommendaory Notices which the Publishers received during the progress of the publication, we have only room to give the following:

From D. MEREDITH REESE, A. M., M. D., *Superintendent of Common Schools in the City and County of New-York.*

NEW-YORK, Oct. 20th, 1845.

Messrs. GREELEY & McELRATH:

Gentlemen: I have examined the Popular Lectures of Dr. LARDNER, ON SCIENCE AND ART, with much satisfaction, and take pleasure in expressing the opinion that you are doing a valuable service to the people of our common country by their publication, and especially by issuing them in numbers, and at so cheap a rate.

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Boiler—Furnace—Method of Feeding it—Combustion of Gas in Flues—Williams's Patent for Method of Consuming unburned Gases—Construction of Grate and Ash-Pit—Magnitude of Heating Surface of Boiler—Steam-Space and Water-Space in Boiler—Position of Flues—Method of Feeding Boiler—Method of Indicating the Level of Water in Boiler—Lever Gauges—Self-Regulating Feeders—Steam-Gauge—Barometer-Gauge—Watt's Invention of the Indicator—Counter—Safety-Valve—Fusible Plugs—Self-Regulating Damper—Brunton's Self-Regulating Furnace—Gross and Useful Effect of an Engine—Horse-Power of Steam-Engines—Table exhibiting the Mechanical Power of Water converted into Steam at various Pressures—Evaporation Proportional to Horse-Power—Sources of Loss of Power—Absence of good Practical Rules for Power—Common Rules followed by Engine-Makers—Duty distinguished from Power—Duty of Boilers—Proportion of Stroke to Diameter of Cylinder—Duty of Engines.

### LECTURE LX.....THE STEAM-ENGINE.

#### (Fifth Lecture.)

Railways—Effects of Railway Transport—History of the Locomotive Engine—Construction of Locomotive Engine by Blinkinop—Messrs. Chapman's Contrivance—Walking Engine—Mr. Stephenson's Engines at Killingworth—Liverpool and Manchester Railway—Experimental Trial of the "Rocket," "Sanspareil," and "Novelty"—Method of Subdividing the Flue into Tubes—Progressive Improvement of Locomotive Engines—Adoption of Brass Tubes—Detailed Description of the most Improved Locomotive Engines—Power of Locomotive Engines—Position of the Eccentrics—Pressure of Steam in the Boiler—Dr. Lardner's Experiments in 1838—Resistance to Railway Trains—Dr. Lardner's Experiments on the Great Western Railway—Experiments on Resistance—Restrictions on Gradients—Compensating Effect of Gradients—Experiment with the "Hecla"—Disposition of Gradients should be Uniform—Methods of surmounting Steep Inclinations.

I could wish that they were found in every School Library, to which their scientific accuracy and numerous moral reflections upon the wonderful works of God should be esteemed no small commendation. But they should be found in every work-shop in the land; for Science and Art are here exhibited in their true relations; and the working men of our country would find here both entertainment and instruction, calculated to improve alike their intellects and their morals.

D. M. REESE.

ALBANY, May 5, 1846.

GREELEY & McELRATH:

Gentlemen: I cordially and cheerfully concur with my friend, Dr. REESE, in the high appreciation which he places on your edition of Dr. Lardner's Lectures, and have no hesitation in recommending them as a most valuable acquisition to our School Libraries.

SAM'L S. RANDALL,

Dep. Supt. Com. Schools.

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Any person wishing to procure this valuable work may apply to our Agents, or to any of the Booksellers or Country Merchants in any part of the United States. Orders are respectfully solicited. GREELEY & McELRATH, Tribune Buildings, New-York.

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JOHN S. SKINNER, EDITOR.

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II. THE MONTHLY JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE will likewise contain about 50 pages per month, and will comprise, 1. *Foreign*: Selections from the higher class of British, French and German periodicals devoted to Agriculture, with extracts from new books which may not be published in the Library, &c. &c. 2. *American*: Editorials, communicated and selected accounts of experiments, improved processes, discoveries in Agriculture, new implements, &c. &c. In this department alone will ours resemble any American work ever yet published. It can hardly be necessary to add that no Political, Economic, or other controverted doctrine, will be inculcated through this magazine.

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This Monthly, which is by far the amplest and most comprehensive Agricultural periodical ever established in America, was commenced in the month of July, 1845, and before the close of the first year among its subscribers were embraced many of the most intelligent farmers, professional men, and retired gentlemen in every City and State in the Union. The reprint of standard works and the variety, elegance and costliness of the Engravings will always render this one of the most useful and interesting, and, in view of the amount of reading matter, the cheapest Farming periodical in this or any other

country. The beautiful work of PETZOLDT ON AGRICULTURAL CHEMISTRY was published complete in the first two numbers of the FARMERS' LIBRARY; and the great work of VON THAER ON THE PRINCIPLES OF AGRICULTURE, TRANSLATED BY WM. SHAW AND CUTHBERT JOHNSON, WITH A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR, &c. was commenced in the number of the LIBRARY for September, 1845, and will be completed entire, without abridgment, in the June number for 1846. This justly celebrated work is alone worth the full subscription price of the FARMERS' LIBRARY, and yet it is not more than one-third of what each subscriber to the Work receives for his subscription money. This work of Von Thaer was originally written and published in the German language, translated and published in the French and afterward in the English language. It is pronounced by competent judges to be the most finished Agricultural Book which has ever been written. The London edition is printed in two octavo volumes, and is sold at about \$8 per copy.

Von Thaer was educated for a Physician, the practice of which he relinquished for the more quiet and philosophical pursuits of Agriculture. Soon after he commenced farming he introduced such decided improvements upon his farm that his fame was soon known from one end of Europe to the other. The most celebrated farmers of England, France, Denmark, Germany, &c. courted his friendship, and his writings were everywhere sought and studied.

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Magnesia; Iron; Humus; Peat; The Different Species of Earths, their Value, Employment, and Properties, in their Relations to the Constituent Parts of the Soil.

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ture of which has been proposed for the sake of their Thread: Syrian Swallow Wort, or Virginian Silk (*Asclepias Syriaca*)—Common Nettle (*Urtica Dioica*)—Fullers' Tease (*Depsacus Fulvorum*);—Coloring-Plants: Dyers' Madder (*Rubia Tinctorum*)—Dyers' Woad (*Isatis Tinctoria*)—Dyers' Weld (*Reseda Luteola*)—Eastard Saffron (*Carthamus Tinctorius*);—The Hop; Tobacco; Chicory; Caraway (*Carum Carui*); Common Fennel (*Feniculum Vulgare*); Anise (*Pimpinella Anisum*); Culture of Fodder-Plants: The Potato—The Field-Beet—The Turnip (*Brassica Rapa*)—Turnips which will not bear Transplanting—Turnips so properly called—Turnips admitting of Transplantation—The Turnip Cabbage—Common Red and White Cabbage (*Brassica Oleacea*; var. *Capitata*)—Carrots—The Parsnip—Maize, or Indian Corn (*Tea Mais*);—Herbage Plants: Common Purple Clover (*Trefolium Pratense*, var. *Sativum*)—White, or Dutch Clover (*Trifolium Repens*)—Strawberry Trefoil (*Trifolium Fragiferum*)—Lucerne (*Medicago Sativa*)—Sainfoin (*Hedysarum Onobrychis*)—Yellow Sickie Medick (*Medicago Falcata*)—Black Medick or Nonsuch (*Medicago Lupulina*)—Corn Spurry (*Spergula Arvensis*)—The Tall-growing Grasses—Ray Grass (*Solum Perenne*)—Common Oatlike Grass (*Avena Elatior*)—Tall Fescue Grass (*Festuca Elatior*)—Cock's-foot Grass (*Dactylis Glomerata*)—Dog-tail Grass (*Cynosurus Cristatus*)—Common Cat's-tail or Timothy Grass (*Phleum Pratense*)—Woolly Soft Grass (*Holcus Sanatus*)—Meadow Fox-tail Grass (*Alopecurus Pratensis*)—Meadow Grass (*Poa*).

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In reference to the first two volumes of the *Farmers' Library and Monthly Journal of Agriculture*, now bound up and ready for sale, the Hon. N. S. BENTON, Secretary of State of the State of New York, writes to the publishers as follows:—

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Department of Common Schools,  
ALBANY, July 15, 1846.

I have examined, with as much care and attention as my time would permit, the first volumes of the JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE AND THE FARMERS' LIBRARY, published by Messrs. Greeley & McElrath, New York, and do not perceive any objections to their introduction into the School District Libraries of the State; and I can have no doubt this work would prove valuable acquisitions in all, but especially to those where the subject of agriculture excites the attention of the inhabitants of the district.

N. S. BENTON, Supt. Com. Schools.

The Deputy Superintendent of the Common Schools of the State of New York, writes as follows:—

SECRETARY'S OFFICE, Department of Common Schools,  
ALBANY, July 9, 1846.

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Very respectfully,

S. S. RANDALL, Dep. Supt. Com. Schools.

# THE FARMERS' LIBRARY

AND

## MONTHLY JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE.

THE first year of this great Agricultural Periodical closes with the June number, 1846. The pages of the Library portion are occupied with Petzholdt's Agricultural Chemistry and Von Thaër's Principles of Agriculture. The pages of the Monthly Journal portion of the work are very diversified in their subjects. The following are some of the leading articles:

No. I.—(JULY).—Memoir of the late Stephen Van Rensselaer (with a fine steel portrait); Deep Plowing—An Experiment illustrating its Effects; British Agricultural Dissertations; Prize Essay on Farm Management, (with an engraved Plan for laying out a farm); Fall Plowing; On the Value and the Progress of Agricultural Science, with Extracts—from J. S. Wadsworth; The Poetry of Rural Life; Claims of Agriculture upon the Business Community; Guano—Recent Experiments in Maryland and Virginia; South-Down Sheep (with lithographic portraits); Letter from Hon. Andrew Stevenson of Virginia; Southern Agriculture—Remarks of the Editor; The Silk Plant of Tripoli (with a lithographic illustration)—Letter from D. S. McCauley to Francis Markoe; Culture of Silk in South Carolina; A New Vegetable (Kohl Rabi) and New Grasses (Tussock Grass)—Recommended to be imported; Agricultural Machines patented; Effects of Electricity on Vegetation; The Disease in Potatoes—Various Theories; Notices of New Books; Great Sale of Cattle at Albany; Items, &c.

No. II.—(AUGUST).—Lady Suffolk (with a portrait); A Dissertation on Horse-Breeding, and on the Trotting Horses of the U. S.; Obituary Notice of Gen. T. M. Forman, of Md.; Turnip Culture in England; Under-Draining; Irrigation; Water-Meadows; Entomology; Canada Thistle (illustrated); Comparative Value of Different Kinds of Sheep for the New-York Farmer; On the Preservation of Health; The Cause of Education; Agricultural Associations and Science; Draining-Tile; Lime as a Fertilizer; XVIIth Annual Fair of the American Institute; New-York State Agricultural Society Cattle Show at Utica; Good Signs for the South, &c. &c.

No. III.—(SEPTEMBER).—Brief Sketch of the Qualities of the Short-Horned Bull (with a portrait)—On the Good and Bad Points of Cattle; St. John's Day Rye and Lucerne; N. Y. State Agricultural Fair; Sugar—its Culture and Manufacture; Comparison of Guano with other Manures; Mismanagement of Stable-Dung Manure; Entomology; Cheshire Cheese—A Prize Essay, by Henry White; Silk Plant—Guano; Native or Wild Maize; Thoughts on Trees and Flowers; The Clergy—their power to improve the Public Taste for Agriculture and Horticulture—Letter from Rev. J. O. Choules; The Poetry of Rural Life; Trials of Sulphuric Acid and Bones for Turnips; Use of Sulphuric Acid with Bones as Compost; Cotton Plant (illustrated), &c. &c.

No. IV.—(OCTOBER).—Memoir of Liebig (with a portrait); The Sort of Information wanted at the South; To Prevent Smut in Wheat; Memoir of the Cotton Plant, by W. B. Seabrook; The Central or Red-Land District of Virginia—Letter from Hon. W. L. Goggin; Various Opinions on Soiling; Principles to observe in the erection of Farm Houses; Management of Farms—Mr Hammond's Farm; Atmosphere of Stables; Reflections on the Progress of Agricultural Improvement, and the Political and Moral Influence of Rural Life—Letter from Gen. Dearborn; Progress of Agricultural Improvement—Letter from Judge Root; Improvement in the mode of attaching Horses to Wagons; Paring and Burning; The Center of Gravity (illustrated); A Review on the Past, Present, and Future State of the Wool Market; List of Premiums awarded by the New-York State Agricultural Fair, &c. &c.

No. V.—(NOVEMBER).—Memoir of Hon. Richard Peters of Pa. (with a portrait); Tunisian Sheep (with

portraits); History and Uses of the Cotton Plant; Letter from Dr. J. Johnson of S. C. on the Silk Plant; Thoughts on Transplanting Trees; Agricultural Address before the Queens Co. Ag. Soc. by J. S. Skinner; Guano as a Manure; Liebig's Explanation of the Principles and use of Artificial Manures; Wine Making, by Rev. S. Weller, with Notes by S. Clark; How to keep Farm Registers; Entomology; Management of Bees; Sulphuric Acid and Bones; The Fair of the American Institute; Sheep and Chestnuts, &c. &c.

No. VI.—(DECEMBER).—Poultry (with illustrations); Successful Experiments in Soiling; Agricultural Products of the United States and Great Britain; The Potato Murrain; Consumption of Sugar in Europe and North America; Wages and Condition of Women and Children employed in the Agricultural Labor in England; History and use of the Cotton Plant (concluded); Wool-growing at the South; On Breeding Horses; Education in Virginia; Potato Starch; The Inclined Plane (with illustrations); Pea Culture in the South; Societies for the Promotion of Agriculture, Horticulture, &c.; Agricultural Premiums; Sheep Husbandry; Peters's Agricultural Account Book; Exposition of the Condition and Resources of Delaware, &c.

No. VII.—(JANUARY).—Farm Buildings (with illustrations); Treatise on Milk Cows, whereby the Quantity and Quality of Milk which any Cow will give may be accurately determined (with numerous illustrations)—by M. Fr. Guénon; Maryland Farmers' Club on the Right Tack; The Mode in which Lime Operates on Soil; Poultry and Useful Recipes; Thoughts on the Distribution of Labor; Jerusalem Artichoke; Cellars vs. Spring-Houses for Dairies; Flax and Hemp Husbandry; One-Horse Carts (with illustrations); The Hydraulic Ram (with illustrations); Comparative Views of the Progress of Population in different Regions of the United States; The Importance of Draining Land, &c.

No. VIII.—(FEBRUARY).—Treatise on Milk Cows (with illustrations)—continued; The Potato Disease; Characteristics of different Breeds of Horses—by Hon. Zadock Pratt; On Fattening Cattle; The Language of Birds—Character and Habits of the Whip-poor-will; The Importance of acquiring a Knowledge of the Natural Science; "Lime Enricheth the Father but Impoverisheth the Son"; Capital needed for Agricultural Improvement; The Use of Salt to Man and Animals; On the Curing of Provisions for the British Markets; Sketch of Belgian Husbandry; The Flower Garden, &c. &c.

No. IX.—(MARCH).—Smithsonian Fund; The Proper Position of Country Dwelling-Houses and Barns; Raising Potatoes from Seed; Scheme of Reducing the Quantity of Cotton; Southern Hemp, or Bear Grass; Insects Injurious to Vegetation; Importing Societies; Treatise on Milk Cows—continued; Quaker or Friends' Farming; Flooding Meadows; The Shepherd's Dog, &c. &c.

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"I have now brought to a termination the task I had imposed upon myself in writing this work. If you will but follow the prescriptions I have given in it, for conducting the larger operations of the field, and for treating the various animals of the farm; and—not to mention the proper plowing and manuring of the soil—as the practice of every farmer demonstrates the necessity of affording due attention to those most important because fundamental operations, if you finish off your fields in a manner indicating care and neatness—plowing round their margins, and turning over the corners; if you keep your fences clean and in a state of repair—your fields free of weeds; if you give your stock abundance of fresh food at regular intervals in winter, and supply them with plenty of clean water on fresh pastures in summer; if you have the farm roads always in a serviceable state, and everything about the steading neat and orderly; if you exhibit skill and taste in all these matters, and put what is called a *fine skin* on your farm, you will not fail to earn for yourself the appellation of a good and exemplary farmer: and when you have everything about you 'thus well disposed,' you will find, with Hesiod of old, that profitably, as well as creditably, for you 'shall glide away thy rustic year.'"



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